

# Heroine of the Battle Road

Mary Flint Hartwell

*A drama of one woman's courage on the night of Paul Revere's ride in April of 1775*

Palmer Faran



The Lincoln Historical Society

# The Rides of April 18 - 19, 1775

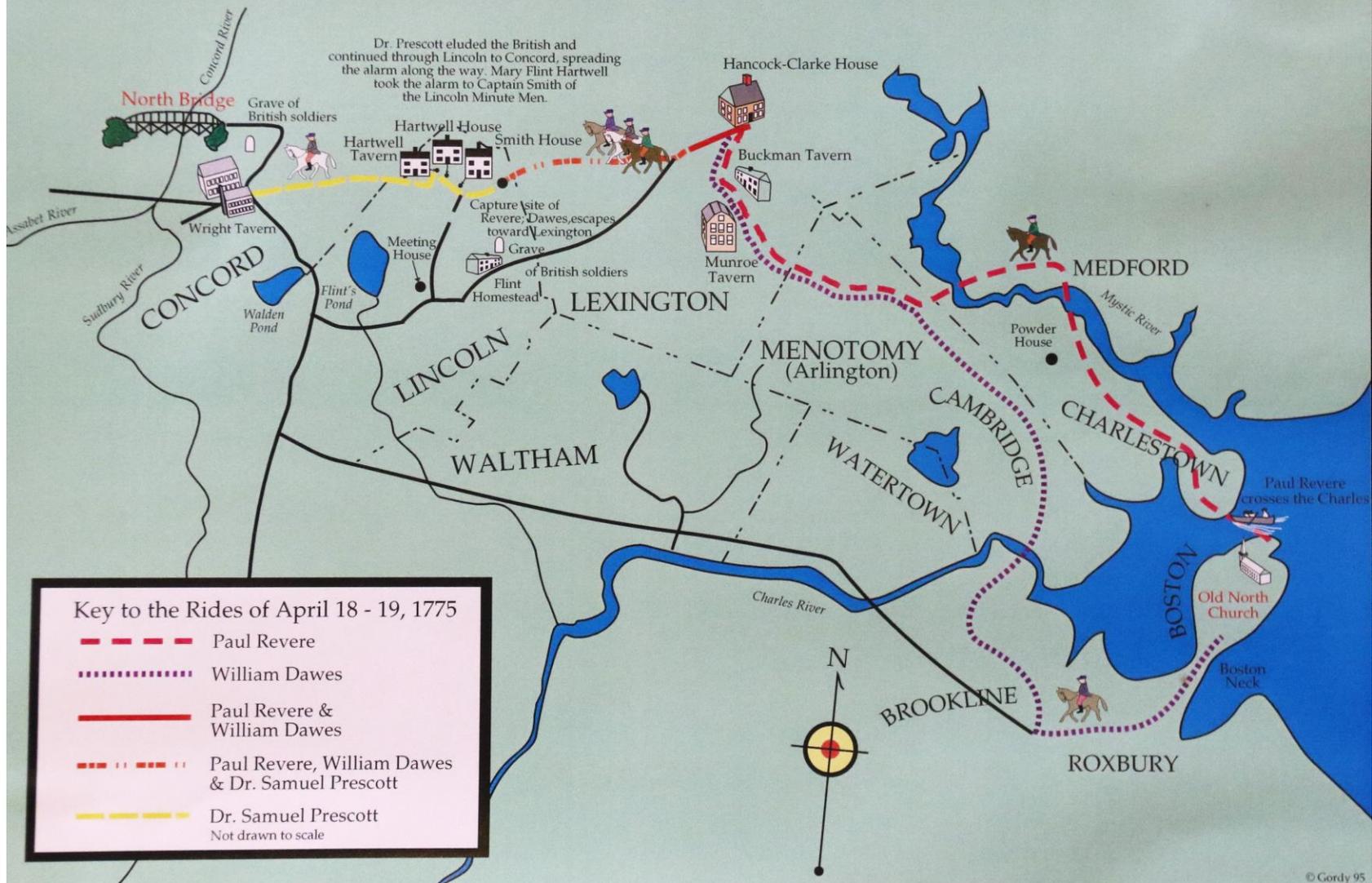


Figure 1 Rides of April 18-19, 1775

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*A Drama of One woman's courage on the night of Paul Revere's ride in April of 1775*

Digital Edition

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## Acknowledgments

### Digital Edition 2018

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Since the play was originally written and performed in 1996, Don Hafner, retired professor of Political Science at Boston College, has done extensive research on events leading up to April 19, 1775, and the events afterwards. He is currently serving as Captain of the Lincoln Minute Men. His research offers insight to some of the events of that night.

### Original Edition, 1995

Many people have helped in this project, but I would particularly like to mention a few: Mary Terrell, whose idea it was to write about women who have not made it into the history books; April Crawford, a student at the University of Montevallo who read an early draft and offered several helpful suggestions; Maureen Tisei, who offered some help in the early stages; Eric Smith who helped with the computer; Jack MacLean, who acted as historical consultant, and whose fascinating fund of information enlivened our working sessions; the Lincoln Public Library staff, who were always ready to help; the Lincoln Minute Men, who contributed some ideas and technical information; the Flint family, who have been enthusiastic about the project; Harriet Rogers, who shared her family history on the Hartwell side; my family who have been patient throughout the process; and most of all, Mary Ann Hales, without whose encouragement and help this book would never have been written.

Palmer Faran  
Lincoln, MA

# Heroine of the Battle Road

## CHARACTERS

NARRATOR	
MARY FLINT HARTWELL	as a grandmother
GEORGE and JONAS HARTWELL	Mary and Samuel's grandsons, ages twelve and ten
MARY FLINT HARTWELL	as a young wife
SUKEY	a nickname for Susanna, who is a servant girl, about thirteen years old
POLLY and SALLY HARTWELL	Mary and Samuel's two daughters, ages four and two
SERGEANT SAMUEL HARTWELL	Mary's husband, a blacksmith, gunsmith, clockmaker, farmer and Minute Man
EPHRAIM HARTWELL	Samuel Hartwell's father and owner of Hartwell Tavern
DOCTOR SAMUEL PRESCOTT	a doctor and Minute Man from Concord
CATHERINE LOUISA SMITH	wife of Captain William Smith, of the Lincoln Minute Men
JAMES PARKS and WILLIAM HOSMER	Lincoln Minute Men
A WOUNDED BRITISH OFFICER	



*Figure 2 Hartwell House*

This photograph of the Hartwell House was taken in 1904. Today, only the chimney is still standing.

## SCENE ONE

BEFORE RISE	<i>Spotlight on NARRATOR at stage right.</i>
NARRATOR	<p><i>Listen my children, and you shall hear Of the midnight ride of Paul Revere, On the eighteenth of April, in Seventy-five;</i></p> <p>Longfellow’s famous poem describes only one of the stories of that historic night, and slightly wrong at that. There were other stories to be told as well, other heroes—and a heroine.</p> <p>In fact, Paul Revere was captured by a British patrol posted in Lincoln, a small town situated between Lexington and Concord. The Patrol had orders to intercept messengers and to prevent any alarm to the countryside. To carry the message through Lincoln and on to Concord, other people took Revere’s place. One of those was Mary Flint Hartwell.</p> <p>The Hartwell farm, on the edge of North Lincoln, was located close to the Bay Road, as it was called then, between Lexington and Concord. In 1775 Mary Hartwell was a young woman, twenty-seven years old, with two young children and a babe in arms. The events of that April evening and the following day remained vivid in her memory. Many years later, she would tell the story to her grandsons. (<i>Spotlight on NARRATOR fades, Spotlight focuses on MARY and her grandson, stage left.</i>)</p>

BEFORE RISE	
TIME	About 1831, MARY FLINT HARTWELL, a grandmother, and her grandson, JONAS HARTWELL, are seated in at the corner of the stage left, MARY in a chair, JONAS on the floor by her side. MARY is sewing; JONAS is playing with a toy. GEORGE HARTWELL, another grandson, runs in, rubbing his hands.
GEORGE ( <i>Breathless</i> )	Oh, it's so cold outside, Grandma. Feels like we might even have a frost.
MARY	We often do have a frost around here, George, even in late April.
JONAS	But it's supposed to be spring. Why is April always so cold?
MARY	It isn't always cold. Not that April when the troops came to Lincoln.
GEORGE ( <i>Sitting on the floor</i> )	Tell us the story, Grandma, about how the soldiers came. Grandfather never talked about it, did he, Jonas? ( <i>Bursting out</i> ) Nobody talks about it. Nobody ever tells us anything!
JONAS	We want to know the truth. What really happened?
GEORGE	How did you know the British were coming?
MARY	Your grandfather was a Minute Man, remember, so he knew about the troop movements in Boston and where their spies were traveling. And it was common knowledge that General Gage wanted that ammunition in Concord. British spies and patrols were traveling the roads around this area all through that winter of '75. ( <i>Pause, as Mary sets down her sewing.</i> ) Of course, we had our spies too. ( <i>She chuckles</i> ) Sometimes we knew what was happening before they did. ( <i>The spotlight fades.</i> )
<i>Figure 3 Kitchen</i>  This photograph of the Hartwell kitchen was taken in 1904. Today, only the chimney is still standing.	
DATE	April 18, 1776.
SETTING	<i>The curtain rises on the kitchen of a New England farmhouse of the late 1700's in Lincoln, Massachusetts. It is early evening, April 18, 1775. At stage left is a small window and a door, leading outside, with hooks beside it on which hang cloaks and a man's jacket. At stage right is another small window and a door, also leading outside. At the back of the stage in the center is a large open fireplace of that era. A long table is in front of it. Two or three chairs of the appropriate style are around the table. A colonial musket hangs over the fireplace. Nearby is a wooden crib. At backstage right is a doorway leading to the rest of the house.</i>

AT RISE	<i>The stage is lighted by a candle on the table and the fire in the fireplace. SUKEY is tending the baby in the crib, humming softly. MARY HARTWELL (a young wife) is near the fireplace. POLLY and SALLY HARTWELL are playing on the floor nearby. As the curtain rises, SAMUEL HARTWELL enters from stage right with a load of logs which he sets down by the fireplace.</i>
SAMUEL	That will take care of us for a while. <i>(Turning to MARY)</i> I've drawn some water too.
MARY	Thank you, Samuel. That should do till morning.
SAMUEL	As I came in, I saw Father walking over here from his tavern.
MARY	I wonder if he will have some more recent news. There has been much activity on this road in the past few weeks. <i>(There is a knock on the door at right. SAMUEL opens the door and EPHRAIM HARTWELL enters.)</i>
EPHRAIM	Good evening, Samuel. Good evening, Mary.
MARY <i>(Smiling)</i>	Good evening, Father. Would you like a cup of cider?
EPHRAIM	No thank you, my dear. The evening is so mild. I thought I would visit with you and my granddaughters. <i>(He crosses to the girls and greets them affectionately.)</i> This month has been warm after such a bitter winter. The apple trees are in bud, though it's only the middle of April.
MARY	Well, it's almost the end of April, Father. Tomorrow will be the nineteenth. But this spring has been unusual. <i>(She turns to SUKEY, who picks up the baby from the crib and brings her over to EPHRAIM.)</i>
EPHRAIM <i>(Admiring the baby)</i>	Good evening, Sukey. How is our little Lucy?
SUKEY	Just fine, sir. No more colic. <i>(She returns the baby to the crib.)</i>
MARY	What news do you have? What is General Gage going to do now?
EPHRAIM	He's ready to make the next move. I have heard many rumors around the tavern.
SAMUEL <i>(Tending the fire)</i>	They're not just rumors, Father. Last month two spies were sent from Boston to scout the roads around Concord.
EPHRAIM	That's true, and there have been reports of unusual troop movements recently in Boston.
MARY	Ever since Gage closed the port of Boston, there has been trouble, and it's getting worse.
EPHRAIM <i>(Sitting on a chair)</i>	There are those in Parliament who are on our side, and some think they can make King George see reason.
MARY <i>(Sighing)</i>	I hope that may be true.
EPHRAIM	Gage is not an unreasonable man.
SAMUEL <i>(Turning to his father)</i>	But he has made some bad mistakes. Last December, the New Hampshire militia outmaneuvered the Regulars in Portsmouth when the troops tried to capture the arms at Fort William and Mary.
EPHRAIM	And there was Salem, remember?
SAMUEL	Yes, the colonists discovered just in time that the Regulars were on their way.
EPHRAIM <i>(Nodding)</i>	They were able to remove the ammunition and hide it before the troops arrived.
SAMUEL <i>(Firmly)</i>	We are equally determined to....
MARY <i>(Interrupting)</i>	Oh Samuel, so far there has been little bloodshed. I hope we can reach some agreement soon before that happens.

SAMUEL	There is no room for compromise, Mary.
MARY ( <i>Quietly</i> )	I understand that, Samuel. ( <i>Turning to SUKEY, she gestures toward the children and lowers her voice.</i> ) It's time for the children to go to bed, Sukey.
SUKEY	Yes, ma'am. The baby should settle down now. ( <i>She walks over to the two girls and urges them to the backstage doorway. The children pass by Mary and SAMUEL, who give them each a hug. SUKEY and the two girls exit backstage.</i> )
EPHRAIM	We must convince Gage that we will not back down.
SAMUEL	I see no way that will happen without a fight. Matters have gone too far. We mean to govern ourselves, and the Royals will never let that happen.
MARY	A short while ago Sukey was outside and saw a patrol riding by on their way to Concord. They were wearing dark cloaks and looked forbidding. Sukey was frightened – she's not much more than a child herself – and rushed inside.
SAMUEL	They must have been spies, trying to find out where the guns are stored in Concord.
MARY	Sukey and I watched them return, and when a breeze blew open one soldier's cloak, I could see that he was armed. ( <i>To herself</i> ) They looked so confident, arrogant even, while our men have no uniforms and must do with whatever they can manage for ammunition.
SAMUEL ( <i>Following his own train of thought</i> )	They couldn't have found out much. The people of Concord have been busy removing their arms and ammunition ever since Revere rode out to warn them the last two Sundays.
EPHRAIM	I understand they've also hidden a large part of their food supplies.
SAMUEL	Everything has been well hidden, some of it even buried underground.
EPHRAIM	Something is going on, Samuel. Gage would like to capture those stores in Concord.
SAMUEL	Certainly, it would be an important victory for him.
EPHRAIM	Are your men prepared? The Minute Men were only set up by the town a short time ago.
SAMUEL	Yes, but we've been getting ready since September, when the Redcoats seized the gunpowder at the Provincial Powder House. ( <i>Angrily</i> ) Right from under our noses almost.
EPHRAIM	And those munitions belonged to us.
SAMUEL	We won't be caught off guard like that again.
EPHRAIM	Good! But do you need more ammunition?
SAMUEL	We do need more guns, but even more important, we need some advance warning.
EPHRAIM	Hmm, for instance, when the Regulars are coming, and what road they will take.
MARY ( <i>Thoughtfully</i> )	If only there were some way to discover exactly when Gage is planning to move and then to bring that news quickly from Boston to Concord.
SAMUEL	And to Lexington. The rumor is that Hancock and Adams are staying there. They may be in danger of arrest.
MARY	If we knew and were ready, perhaps it wouldn't be necessary to fight.
EPHRAIM	Something is going to happen soon. I feel it ( <i>He rises.</i> ) Now I must return to my tavern and take care of business. ( <i>He walks over to the door at right and turns.</i> ) Good night Mary.

MARY	Good night Father. (SAMUEL joins EPHRAIM and opens the door. They exit. MARY follows them to the door and stands there looking after them.)
MARY (Worried)	I wonder if Father is right...if something is going to happen soon. (The light fades. The curtain falls.)

## SCENE TWO

BEFORE RISE	<i>The spotlight focuses on MARY and her grandsons stage left.</i>
JONAS	I wish I'd been there, I wouldn't have been afraid.
GEORGE (Scornfully)	Oh, you would too. You couldn't say "boo" to a goose.
JONAS	Could too! I would have been brave.
GEORGE	Hah! I'm the one should have been there. I would have been a Minute Man just like Grandfather. Wouldn't I, Grandma?
MARY	Of course, my dear. You both would have been very brave, I'm sure. There were many brave people that night. That's what General Gage didn't understand – how determined we were. (The spotlight fades.)
AT RISE	<i>The same setting as in Scene One, but now the stage is dark. The clatter of a horse's hooves can be heard approaching on the right. The sound stops. There is a pause and a pounding on the door at the right.</i>
VOICE OFFSTAGE RIGHT (In a stage whisper)	Open up! (A faint light illuminates the stage, and SAMUEL HARTWELL enters from backstage. He takes the candle from the table and lights it at the fireplace.)
SAMUEL (Crossing to the door)	Who's there?
VOICE	Samuel Prescott from Concord, a Son of Liberty. I have news, important news. (SAMUEL opens the door as PRESCOTT enters. MARY, holding her baby, and SUKEY enter from the backstage doorway. They stand quietly near the table listening to the conversation. As the men talk, the two little girls, POLLY and SALLY, also enter the kitchen and stand by MARY.)
PRESCOTT (Breathless)	The Regulars are coming. They've already left Boston. Paul Revere and Billy Dawes rode out with the news.
SAMUEL	How do you know this?
PRESCOTT	I met them as they were leaving Lexington and offered to help. We're been warning people along the way.
SAMUEL	But where is Revere? What happened?
PRESCOTT	About half a mile this side of the Lincoln line we ran into a patrol. They captured Revere. I think Billy Dawes rode back to Lexington. I jumped my horse over a stone wall and rode into the swamp and through the woods. This is the first house I could reach.
SAMUEL (Curiously)	But tell me, what were you doing in Lexington at this late hour?
PRESCOTT (Smiling)	I was visiting my fiancée, Miss Lydia Mulliken, and was on my way back to Concord. It's been a busy night. (He grins.) I caught up with another Minute Man, Nathaniel Baker. He was courting over in Lexington too. Now he's gone to South Lincoln to alert them.
SAMUEL	What about Hancock and Adams? I've heard a rumor that they're in Lexington. Are they safe?

PRESCOTT	Yes, Revere warned them in time. He crossed the Charles River and rode out through Charlestown. Dawes took the route through Roxbury and joined Revere in Lexington.
SAMUEL	How many troops, do you know?
PRESCOTT	About seven hundred, maybe more. Now I must ride on to Concord. But Captain Smith must be warned to get his men ready.
SAMUEL	We will take care of that.
PRESCOTT (Turning to MARY)	Be careful, ma'am. This house is close to the road and the patrol is not far away. <i>(He exits by the door at stage right. The clatter of hooves resumes, fading into the distance. SAMUEL closes the door and stands for a moment as if in thought. He places the candle on the table and turns to the two women.)</i>
SAMUEL	I must make my preparations quickly. Sukey, you go to warn Captain Smith. You know Smith's house -- it's just back down the road toward Lexington.
SUKEY (Trembling)	No! No! I can't go. I heard him. There're soldiers back there. I saw the soldiers before.
<p><i>Figure 4 The Regulars are Coming</i></p> <p>An illustration from <i>Harper's Magazine</i>, 1875, published for the Centennial celebration in that year.</p>	
SAMUEL	But Sukey...
SUKEY (Turning to MARY, pleading)	We saw them before, ma'am, remember? Dressed all fancy on those big horses with those long knives and guns. <i>(She gestures widely with her hands to indicate a sword.)</i> They'll kill me! <i>(At this, the two little girls start to cry.)</i>
SAMUEL (Annoyed)	This is nonsense, Sukey. You must...
SUKEY (Covering her face)	No! No! Don't make me! <i>(Running to MARY.)</i> We've got to be careful, ma'am. That's what that man said. He said those soldiers are right near. <i>(She clutches MARY, who is staring intently at SAMUEL.)</i>
SAMUEL (Shaking his head)	No, Mary ... I know what you're thinking.
MARY	Yes, Samuel. I must go. <i>(She turns slowly to SUKEY and hands her the infant.)</i> Take the baby quickly, Sukey.
SUKEY (Pleading)	Oh no! Don't go! Please! It's dangerous for you!

MARY	Hush! I must. There's no time to lose. Take care of the children. <i>(She takes her cloak from the wall. SAMUEL follows and wraps the cloak around her. Suddenly POLLY screams and rushes to MARY, grabbing at her skirts.)</i>
POLLY <i>(Wailing)</i>	No! Mama! No! Stay! <i>(SAMUEL leans down and picks POLLY up gently.)</i>
SAMUEL	Quiet, Polly. <i>(To MARY)</i> All right then. Go by the road, dear, but stay close to the stone walls. Be careful. <i>(Sighs)</i> Sukey is right. The patrol is nearby. Who knows what they might do?
<p><i>Figure 5 To Arms, To Arms, The War has Begun</i></p> <p>“The clatter of hooves resumes, fading into the distance.” An illustration from a history published in 1905.</p>	
MARY	But surely, they wouldn't harm a woman, Samuel.
SAMUEL	I don't know, Mary. But in the dark, at this time of night, they won't ask questions.
MARY	I will be careful, Samuel, and I will be back to help you. <i>(They walk to the door, which SAMUEL opens. They embrace briefly and MARY gives him a parting look of affection as she exits. SUKEY holds the baby in one arm and looks on fearfully. She ducks her head and sobs, then moves over to take POLLY from SAMUEL and exits backstage right with the baby and the two girls. SAMUEL closes the door. Alone on the stage, he stares at the door as if he could look through it. After a moment, he turns toward the fireplace. Lifting the musket from the wall, he sets it on the table.)</i>
SAMUEL <i>(Looking down at his musket)</i>	We have work to do today, my friend, and no one knows where it will end. They have started this, but by the grace of God, we will finish it. <i>(The curtain falls.)</i>

## SCENE THREE

BEFORE RISE	<i>The spotlight turns to MARY and her grandsons, as before.</i>
JONAS	<i>(Hesitantly)</i> Were you afraid, Grandma?
GEORGE <i>(Interrupting)</i>	Where were the soldiers? Could you see them?
MARY	I could not see them, but I knew they were not far away. Yes, I was afraid, but there was no time to think of that. The moon was low in the sky, so it was very dark, and the night was unusually warm.
GEORGE	What did Captain Smith do?
MARY	As soon as I gave him the message, he pulled on his boots and dashed out to the barn for his horse. As I walked back, I could hear his horse's hooves clattering over the road to the Center and the Meeting House.
GEORGE	Did they ring the Meeting House bell?
MARY	Yes, of course. That was the alarm signal for the Minute Men.
GEORGE <i>(Turning to JONAS)</i>	The Lincoln Minute Men were the first to arrive at Concord and the North Bridge. That was because of Grandma.
MARY	But there were many others too, George, who spread the news to other towns. All night long people were riding over the countryside warning that the Redcoats were coming, and all the next morning Minute Men arrived at Concord from the surrounding towns. <i>(In the distance the Meeting House bell rings, as the spotlight fades on MARY and her grandsons.)</i>
AT RISE	<i>The same setting as Scene One, but now it is early morning. MARY is at the fireplace, SUKEY is tending the baby in the crib. The two girls are playing quietly at center stage. There is a knock on the door at left.</i>
VOICE	It's your neighbor, Catherine Smith.
MARY <i>(Crossing to the door and opening it)</i>	Come in, Catherine. <i>(CATHERINE SMITH enters.)</i> Do you have any news?
CATHERINE	I have no more news than you, my dear. <i>(She walks over to the crib.)</i> Good morning, Sukey. I see that baby Lucy is looking better now. <i>(Turning back to MARY)</i> The Captain left early, as you know. I wanted to tell you how brave I think you are.
MARY	I was only doing what had to be done. But I was scared. I knew the patrol was close by. <i>(Sighing)</i> The hardest part was watching Samuel leave .... <i>(Pausing to get control of herself)</i> and not knowing when, or even if, I will see him again.
CATHERINE	He will be back, Mary, of course he will. You must think of your own safety and your children. The Regulars will be coming soon on their way to Concord. Perhaps you should stay with your brother at your father's farm. It's in the center of town and away from this road.
MARY <i>(Thoughtfully)</i>	You may be right. The Bay Road passes so close to our front door, and it's the only road from Lexington to Concord.
CATHERINE	I must return to my house now. I'm afraid of what the troops may do. Some neighbors have talked of shooing their cows into the woods so the soldiers won't get them. And others are burying whatever valuables they have. <i>(She crosses to the door at left with MARY.)</i>

<p><i>Figure 6 A Minute Man Preparing for War</i></p> <p>“The hardest part was watching Samuel leave...” In this 1905 illustration, one can see that the kitchen interior is similar to the Hartwell kitchen.</p>	
<p>MARY</p>	<p>Goodbye, my dear. Let us pray for our men. <i>(She returns to the kitchen and busies herself at the fireplace. For a few minutes there is quiet. From off stage left, noises can be heard slowly approaching -- the sound of horses' hooves, the rattle of muskets and bayonets, the music of fife and drum, and the sound of men marching.)</i></p>
<p>SUKEY <i>(Looking out the window, stage left, gasps)</i></p>	<p>Look, ma'am, look! There they are! The soldiers! We have to hide or they'll kill us! <i>(She grasps MARY's arm.)</i> The woods! We'll be safe in the woods. Others will be there. <i>(She runs out the door stage right. MARY steps over to the window to glance outside. The children are startled, and sensing something wrong, toddle over to her and clutch her skirts. The noise increases.)</i></p>
<p>MARY <i>(As though entranced)</i></p>	<p>What a sight! And our poor men... <i>(Pause. As the light fades on stage, the spotlight focuses on MARY with her grandsons at the left front corner of the stage.)</i></p>
<p>MARY <i>(To her grandsons)</i></p>	<p>The army of the King marched up in fine order, and their bayonets glistened in the sunlight like a field of waving grain. If it hadn't been for the purpose they came for, I should say it was the handsomest sight I ever saw in my life! <i>(The spotlight fades. The curtain falls.)</i></p>

## SCENE FOUR

<p>BEFORE RISE</p>	<p><i>The spotlight focuses on MARY and her grandsons, as before.</i></p>
<p>MARY</p>	<p>Of course, we didn't know then what had happened in Lexington.</p>
<p>GEORGE</p>	<p>Bang! Bang! <i>(Gestures as if shooting a gun.)</i> That must have been exciting.</p>
<p>JONAS</p>	<p>Was anyone killed?</p>
<p>MARY</p>	<p>Eight brave men died that morning on Lexington Green. But none of the British soldiers were hurt.</p>
<p>JONAS</p>	<p>So the troops were on their way to Concord when they passed this house?</p>
<p>MARY</p>	<p>Yes, they were looking for the ammunition that was stored in Concord.</p>
<p>GEORGE</p>	<p>Later, Grandma, after Concord, I bet those soldiers didn't look so grand then.</p>
<p>MARY</p>	<p>No, they didn't look so grand. They were tired...and scared...and angry. And I was frightened. <i>(The spotlight fades. The curtain rises.)</i></p>

At RISE	<i>The same setting as Scene One, but it is afternoon. MARY and her two daughters are standing by the table. In the distance from stage right, the sounds of gunfire, shouts, marching feet, horses' hooves. The noise gradually increases. MARY rushes to the window at right and gasps.)</i>
MARY	The troops! Coming back from Concord! ( <i>Peering through the window</i> ) But some of our men are there too. ( <i>Shots are heard nearby, men shouting, and footsteps approach the house.</i> )
BRITISH VOICE	Damned rebels! Won't show their faces!
ANOTHER VOICE	Didn't know the yokels could shoot so good.
MARY ( <i>To herself</i> )	What can I do?
A THIRD VOICE	So many! Must have been near a thousand in those woods. Where'd they all come from?
FIRST VOICE	Look out behind! ( <i>Another shot, then quiet.</i> )
MARY ( <i>Picking up the baby from the crib and whispering</i> )	Under the table, children... and be quiet. Like hide-and-seek. ( <i>She pushes the two girls under the table. Holding the baby, she crouches under the table with her children.</i> )
FIRST VOICE ( <i>Closer</i> )	There's a house must belong to some damned rebel.
SECOND VOICE ( <i>Angrily</i> )	Let's burn it down! ( <i>Footsteps approach the house. A shot is heard and the whine of a bullet. A broken musket is thrust through the window at stage right and falls into the room.</i> )
THIRD VOICE	No time for that. Come on! We've got to keep moving. ( <i>The voices recede into the distance. There is a pause. MARY, holding the baby, comes out from under the table and looks around, distraught.</i> )
<i>Figure 7 British Retreat</i> "They were tired...and scared...and angry." An early rendition of the British retreat from Concord.	
MARY ( <i>To herself</i> )	Catherine is right. It is dangerous here; our house is so close to the road. ( <i>More shots can be heard. MARY runs to the window, stage right.</i> ) It's the barn! They're fighting around the barn. ( <i>She watches as the gunfire and shouts fade away, as do the other sounds of the battle.</i> ) Have they gone? ( <i>She runs to the window stage left.</i> ) Yes. Come children, we must leave. ( <i>MARY prepares to leave, gathering up items for the children and herself. After a few moments, there is a knock on the door at left, and CATHERINE SMITH rushes in.</i> )
CATHERINE	You must go now, Mary, with the children. There may be stragglers and who knows what they will do. ( <i>Looking around</i> ) Where is Sukey?
MARY	I don't know. The poor girl was so frightened when she saw the soldiers that she fled in panic. She spoke about hiding in the woods.
CATHERINE	Never mind. Here, let me help you. ( <i>She takes the baby.</i> )

MARY	I'll hitch up the horse. We will be safe with my brother. <i>(She exits stage right with the children. At stage left outside, footsteps approach, someone groans, and then a faint knock at the door. CATHERINE places the baby in the crib and moves toward the door hesitantly.)</i>
CATHERINE <i>(Fearfully)</i>	Who is there?
JAMES PARKS	James Parks, ma'am.
WILLIAM HOSMER	And William Hosmer. Can we come in?
JAMES PARKS	We have a wounded soldier. <i>(CATHERINE opens the door and gasps as two Minute Men enter, half carrying a wounded British officer. His scarlet uniform is covered with blood. They lay him on one of the chairs.)</i>
JAMES PARKS <i>(In a low voice)</i>	We picked him up by the road. He's in a bad way. Can you do something for him?
WILLIAM HOSMER	He was on his hands and knees, trying to stand. We couldn't leave him!
CATHERINE <i>(Staring at the officer)</i>	Why, he's so young. <i>(Taking a cup from the table, she dips it into a pitcher of water and brings it to the soldier. He opens his eyes.)</i>
BRITISH OFFICER	<i>(Faintly)</i> Old enough...
CATHERINE	I'll do what I can, but you can't stay here. <i>(Turns to the Minute Men.)</i> You must carry him to my house.
JAMES PARKS <i>(Aside to HOSMER)</i>	We will have to report to Captain Smith that we have a prisoner.
WILLIAM HOSMER <i>(To PARKS)</i>	Yes, if indeed he will still be alive.
BRITISH OFFICER	I fear it's no use, ma'am. I can tell. <i>(He has difficulty speaking, spits up blood.)</i> You've been so kind....gold sovereign in my.... <i>(His voice fades.)</i>
CATHERINE	Hush, now. We will help you. James, take him to my house. Someone is there to help, and I will be home soon. <i>(The Minute Men pick up the officer and carry him out the door at stage left.)</i>
CATHERINE <i>(Looking after them)</i>	So young. He probably doesn't even understand what's happening here. <i>(MARY enters from stage right with the children. CATHERINE picks up the baby and walks to the door with MARY.)</i>
MARY	Thank you, Catherine, for your help. The horse and cart are ready, and we will soon be at my brother's. <i>(They all exit stage right. The lights fade. The curtain falls.)</i>

sums as a Minute man (1775)	
Feb <sup>y</sup> 4 <sup>th</sup> 1776	Paid to Mr. Elijah Wellington Eightteen Shillings for one sett of Accouttriments for minuteman (so called) agreeable to y <sup>e</sup> Vote of the Town ~ ~ ~ ~ ~ 0 0 18
January 4 <sup>th</sup> 1776	Paid Cap <sup>n</sup> Timothy Weston two Pounds 5s for Pence for taking care of y <sup>e</sup> Meeting House and Ringing y <sup>e</sup> Bell from y <sup>e</sup> middle of May 1774 to the middle of May 1775 & for making a Coffin & Digging a Grave for Daniel Hager Decest. ~ ~ ~ ~ ~ 2 00 4
Feb <sup>y</sup> 4 <sup>th</sup> 1776	Paid Mr. Ephraim Brooks Eightteen Shillings for one set of Accouttriments as a minut. man. Agreeable to y <sup>e</sup> Town vote & also for six feet of wood for the use of y <sup>e</sup> School in y <sup>e</sup> North Part of y <sup>e</sup> Town Six Shillings ~ ~ ~ ~ ~ 1 4 0
Feb <sup>y</sup> 4 <sup>th</sup> 1776	Paid Mr. Ephraim Hartwell Nineteen Shillings & two Pence halfpenny that he advanced to pay for keep for John Hager in y <sup>e</sup> year 1774 ~ ~ ~ ~ ~ 0 19 2 1/2
Feb <sup>y</sup> 4 <sup>th</sup> 1776	Paid Mr. Samuel Hartwell Eightteen Shillings for one sett of Accouttriments as a Minute man so called agreeable to the Vote of this Town ~ ~ ~ ~ ~ 0 0 18 0
Feb <sup>y</sup> 4 <sup>th</sup> 1776	Paid Mr. Joshua Child Jun <sup>r</sup> Eightteen Shillings for one sett of Accouttriments as a Minute man so called as agreeable to the vote of the Town ~ ~ ~ ~ ~ 0 0 18 0
Feb <sup>y</sup> 4 <sup>th</sup> 1776	Paid Deacon Joshua Brooks Eightteen Shillings for one sett of Accouttriments for his son agreeable to y <sup>e</sup> Towns vote & also for 5 feet 4 <sup>th</sup> of wood found for y <sup>e</sup> use of y <sup>e</sup> Schole in y <sup>e</sup> North part of the Town ~ ~ ~ ~ ~ 1 13 9
Feb <sup>y</sup> 4 <sup>th</sup> 1776	Paid Mr. Joseph Mason Eightteen Shillings for one sett of accouttriments for his son Elijah as a minut. man agreeable to the Vote of the Town ~ ~ ~ ~ ~ 0 18 0
Feb <sup>y</sup> 4 <sup>th</sup> 1776	Paid to Mr. Joseph Abbot Jun <sup>r</sup> y <sup>e</sup> sum of Eightteen Shillings for one sett of accouttriments for him self as a minut. man so called ~ ~ ~ ~ ~ 0 18 0

Figure 8 Treasurer's Accounts from the Town of Lincoln

Treasurer's Accounts showing payment to the Minute Men in 1775 and 1776. One of the entries is for Samuel Hartwell.

## Lincoln Minute Man Company, April 19, 1775

<u>Name</u>	<u>Age</u>	<u>Name</u>	<u>Age</u>
Capt. William Smith	29	Jacob Foster	?
Lt. Samuel Farrar, Jr.	39	Isaac Gage	21
2nd Lt. Samuel Hoar	31	Jonathan Gage	19
Sgt. Samuel Hartwell	32	Nathaniel Gove	25
Sgt. David Fisk	43	Daniel Harrington	24
Sgt. John Hartwell	27	Isaac Hartwell	22
Sgt. Jonas Mason	26	Daniel Hosmer	29
Corp. Abijah Mead	26	William Hosmer, Jr.	17
Corp. Elijah Wellington	28	Abijah Munroe	19
Corp. Ebenezer Brown	23	Aaron Parks	27
Corp. Joseph Abbott, Jr.	23	Eleazer Parks	20
Fifer Joseph Mason, Jr.	24	James Parks	20
Fifer Elijah Mason	17	John Parks	35
Drummer Daniel Brown	?17	Jonas Parks	35
Nehemiah Abbott	20	Willard Parks	21
Abel Adams	18	William Parks	40
Joel Adams	c27	Abraham Pierce	19
Jacob Baker, Jr.	31	Joseph Pierce	22
James Baker	25	Artemas Reed	28
Nathaniel Baker	28	Jesse Smith	19
Daniel Billings, Jr.	21	Jonathan Smith	27
Nathan Billings	39	Gregory Stone, Jr.	21
Timothy Billings	26	John Thorning	18
Thomas Blodget	?	William Thorning	17
Benjamin Brooks	18	Nathan Tidd	19
Joshua Brooks, Jr. (III)	20	John Wesson	24
Nathan Brown, Jr. (III)	20	John Wesson, Jr.	19
Daniel Child	21	Joseph Wheat	29
Joshua Child, Jr.	26	Enos Wheeler	36
Samuel Dakin, Jr.	30	Solomon Whitney, Jr.	39
Humphrey Farrar	35		

*Data from John C. MacLean, A Rich Harvest: The History, Buildings, and People of Lincoln, Massachusetts (Lincoln: Lincoln Historical Society, 1987), table 9.1.*

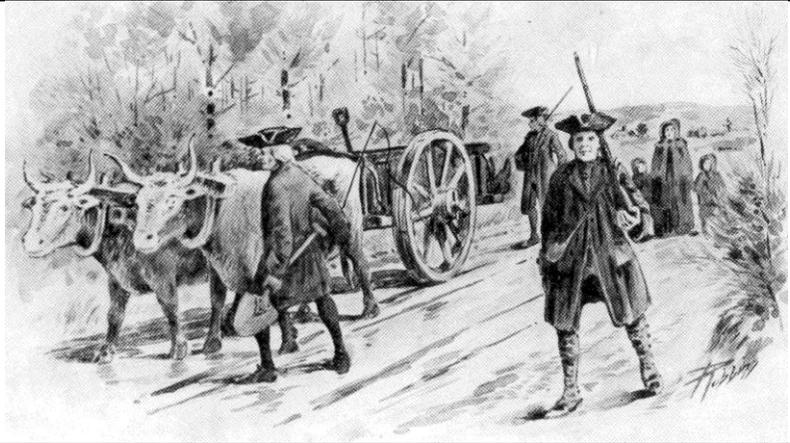
*Figure 9 Lincoln Minute Man Company, April 19, 1775*

## SCENE FIVE

BEFORE RISE	<i>The spotlight shines on MARY and her grandsons stage left.</i>
MARY	We drove to my brother's farm in the center of Lincoln and spent the night there. It was away from the battle, and we were safe.
JONAS ( <i>Timidly</i> )	Did you see any soldiers on your way, Grandma?
MARY	No, the fighting was moving back toward Lexington. Our men fought the soldiers --- all the way to Charlestown. The troops barely managed to cross the Charles River to Boston.
GEORGE	Hmpf! I wouldn't have let them get away.
MARY ( <i>Gently</i> )	The British were reinforced by fresh soldiers at Lexington, George, and they were far better equipped than we were. The next day was quiet when I went back to feed the animals and to see if the house had been harmed.
GEORGE	And was it all right, Grandma?
MARY	Yes. Of course, the window had been broken, and the musket was lying on the floor, also broken. ( <i>She chuckles.</i> ) Your grandfather picked it up later and repaired it. One more musket for the Minute Men.
JONAS	What happened to the wounded British soldier? And to the gold sovereign?
MARY	The poor man died several days later at Captain Smith's house. When they went to bury him, they found the gold sovereign sewn into his coat.
GEORGE	Were there other British soldiers who died?
JONAS	What happened to them?
MARY	On my way back to my brother's farm, I found in front of me a cart drawn by two oxen and filled with five dead British soldiers.
JONAS	Who was taking them? Where were they going?
MARY	Samuel's father, Ephraim, was driving the cart with his servant. At the top of the hill, Edmund Wheeler came along to help. I followed them all the way into Lincoln Center, to my brother's farm where I stopped. The cart lumbered past to the burying ground. ( <i>Pause. The spotlight focuses on MARY, as her voice continues, dreamily.</i> ) It seemed to me I was the only mourner. My thoughts went out for the wives, parents, and children away across the Atlantic, who would never again see their loved ones; and I left the house, and taking my little children by the hand, I followed the rude hearse to the grave hastily made in the burial-ground. I remember how cruel it seemed to put them into one large trench without any coffins. There was one in a brilliant uniform, whom I supposed to have been an officer. His hair was tied up in a cue. ( <i>Pause. The spotlight fades on MARY and focuses on NARRATOR at stage right.</i> )
NARRATOR	The news spread quickly, and so did the fighting --- throughout the colonies --- until it finally ended six long, bitter years later, in Yorktown, Virginia. The cost was high. Many never came back, and some who did were never the same. But the fight was begun on this short stretch of road, in these small farming towns near Boston, by ordinary people -- farmers, blacksmiths, clockmakers, grandfathers, fathers, wives, sons and daughters --- defending their families, their homes, their way of life.

*Figure 10 Hearse*

“I left the house, and taking my little children by the hand, I followed the rude hearse to the grave hastily made in the burial-ground.”



THE END

### Production Notes

<i>Characters</i>	Four females; seven males; children, two girls, ages four and two, and two boys, ages twelve and ten; plus, a narrator.
<i>Playing time</i>	30-35 minutes
<i>Costumes</i>	Women, the homespun dresses of the late 1700's, aprons, mob caps, a cloak for Mary. Men, knee breeches, stockings, homespun shirts (the Minute Men had no uniform); British uniform for the British soldier. Children, a similar version, dresses and aprons for Polly and Sally, shirts and knee breeches for Jonas and George.
<i>Properties</i>	A chair for Grandmother Mary and something for her to sew, and a toy for Jonas. A doll to represent baby Lucy. A musket for Sergeant Samuel Hartwell, and a broken musket. If a large kettle can be found for the kitchen fireplace, the scene would be more authentic. Also, any other utensils that would be suitable for the time period. In Scene Four a pitcher and cups on the table.
<i>Setting</i>	The kitchen of a New England farmhouse of the 1700's. At stage right is a small window and a door, leading outside. The window can be just a square opening with cross bars to indicate the panes. At stage left is another window and a door, also leading outside, with hooks (wooden pegs would be more correct) beside it on which hang various cloaks and a man's jacket. A large open fireplace of that era, for cooking, is at back of the stage in the center. A colonial musket hangs over the fireplace. A long table is in front with several chairs placed around it. In Mary Hartwell's story, the table has leaves that can be dropped, but the same effect could be obtained with a large plain tablecloth that drops over the table. A child's crib is near the fireplace. (A doll's crib would work.) At backstage right is a doorway that leads to the rest of the house.
<i>Special Effects</i>	Ways to make blood for the wounded soldier: Chocolate syrup or hand dishwashing liquid plus food coloring. For spitting up blood, a gel capsule from the pharmacy filled with fake blood (not detergent mixture) that is bitten into at the appropriate time.
<i>Lighting</i>	Spotlight for Mary Hartwell and grandsons where indicated. Also, spotlight for Narrator.

## Epilogue

The characters in this drama went on with their lives, although forever changed by these events.

Mary and Samuel Hartwell had three more children. Samuel Hartwell served as quartermaster and fought at the Battle of White Plains. In 1780 he was elected Town Treasurer. He died in August of 1829 at the age of eighty-seven. Mary Hartwell lived on until July of 1846, when she died at the age of ninety-eight. She often related the stories of April 19<sup>th</sup> to her grandchildren, and it is through her grandchildren that the stories have become part of history.

Samuel Prescott became a surgeon in the Continental Army and later joined the crew of a New England privateer which was captured by the Royal Navy. He was imprisoned at Halifax, Nova Scotia, and died there in 1777. His fiancée, Lydia Mulliken, waited until 1783, the end of the war, for him to return, and finally married another. Lydia's mother's house in Lexington was burned by the retreating British soldiers on that day of April 19<sup>th</sup>.

Nathaniel Baker had more luck. He fought that morning alongside his father and brothers. He later returned to Lincoln and married his sweetheart, Elizabeth Taylor, whom he had been courting that fateful night.

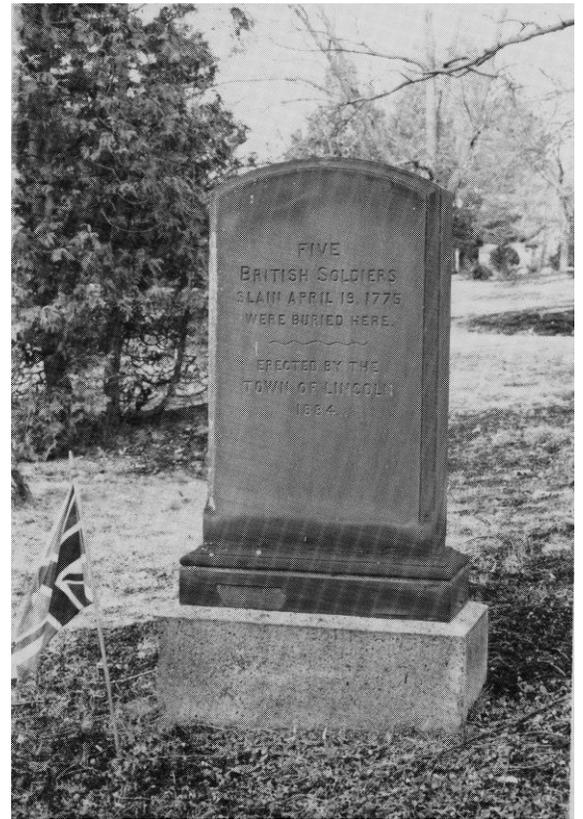
Captain William Smith, who was the brother of Abigail Smith Adams wife of future president John Adams, returned to Lincoln, where he was paid for his services. However, he fought other battles in the war and was captured in 1780. His wife stayed on at the farm in Lincoln, but Captain Smith never returned to his family. He died in 1787.

The Hartwell house continued in the family until 1875. In the twentieth century it became a restaurant, until a fire in 1968 destroyed the building. The magnificent chimney still stands, however, and the site is now a part of Minute Man National Historical Park, as are the Hartwell Tavern and the William Smith house, both of which have been restored. The Park, which was established in September 1959, covers part of the Battle Road from the western edge of Lexington through Lincoln to the outskirts of Concord. It also includes the North Bridge in Concord, where there is a visitor center.

The Flint Homestead, in the center of Lincoln, where Mary spent the night of April 19<sup>th</sup> with her brother, is still owned and farmed by Flints, one of the few surviving farms in New England to be held in the same family for over three hundred years. Mary Flint was born here in 1748, and in 1775 she walked past this homestead as she followed the cart with the British soldiers to the burial ground. Each year on the Sunday following April 19<sup>th</sup>, the Lincoln Minute Men march past the Flint Homestead on their way to a commemorative service at the burying ground.

*Figure 11 British Grave*

(Right) Across the lane on a low hill is a small monument to the five British soldiers buried there on an April morning over two hundred years ago.



*Figure 12 Hartwell Graves*

(Below) The graves of Mary and Samuel Hartwell are situated in the old Lincoln cemetery, along with that of their daughter Lucy, the “babe in arms,” who was born in November 1774 and never married.





*Figure 13 Flint Homestead*

This photograph, taken about 1904, shows the Flint Homestead where Mary Flint was born in 1748. The front rooms (two up and two down) were the original house on this seventeenth-century farm. The rest of the house has been added on at different times. The barn visible at the right was built in 1870. The original barn is out of sight at the rear of the house.



*Figure 14 Minute Men March*

(Left) The Lincoln Minute Men march along on an unpaved portion of the Battle Road that looks much as it did in 1775.

*Figure 15 Descendants at Cemetery*

(Below) The photograph was taken on April 19, 1961 at the ceremony in Lincoln cemetery to honor the heroes of 1775. At left is Abby Flint; at the right are David and Mary Rogers. They represent descendants of both sides of the family, Flints and Hartwells.



This map is from a publication by Minute Man National Historical Park showing the road as it would have appeared in 1775.

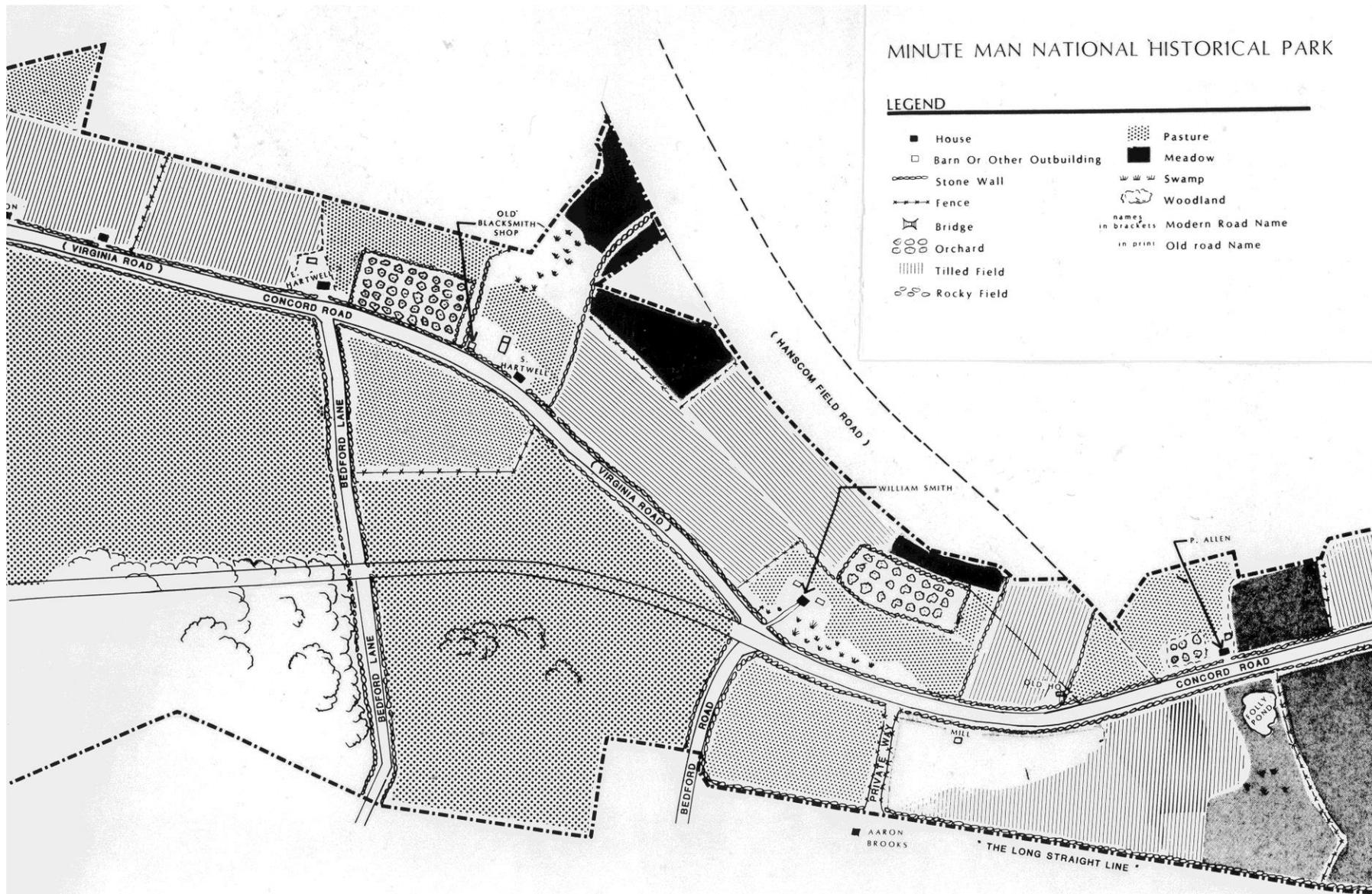


Figure 16 Map of Hartwell Farms

## Appendix A

### Historical Background

By April of 1775 a series of events had occurred in the American Colonies that had alienated the colonists from England, the mother country. During this period the town of Lincoln was similar in many ways to other farming communities on the outskirts of Boston.

The late seventeenth and early eighteenth centuries had been prosperous years in the colonies. There were occasional wars with the French and the Indians, but after England signed the Treaty of Utrecht in 1713, a time of peace followed. During this period, much of the area that later became the town of Lincoln was a part of Concord. Largely a farming community, it was somewhat isolated. Poor roads made it difficult for the residents to attend their church in Concord, and in addition, many were unhappy with the preaching of that church. The establishment of a Precinct in 1746 meant that the residents of this area could build their own Meeting House and could push toward establishing a separate township.

One of the most prominent figures in these early years was Ephraim Flint. At the age of twenty-four, he had received a substantial inheritance, comprising most of his 257-acre farm, one of the largest in Lincoln. His Harvard education set him apart from other Massachusetts farmers. Included in his large library were two Bibles, several dictionaries, *Livy's History of Rome*, and several legal books. It was very natural that he would become involved in the politics of the town. In March of 1743 Ephraim Flint married Ruth Wheeler, and their first child, Ephraim, was born in 1745. Early in 1748, their daughter Mary--- the future heroine of our story --- was born. That same year, a peace treaty would end one of the many wars between England and France, but the peace would be short-lived. In fact, the world into which Mary was born would soon undergo many changes.

In 1754 the French and Indian War began, and in that same year, the Town of Lincoln was finally established. Ephraim Flint became the first Town Clerk, the first Treasurer and one of the first Selectmen. Then, in December of 1762, when Mary was only fourteen years old, Ephraim died. His widow, Ruth Flint, would give birth to the last of their six children the following year, the same year that the French and Indian War ended and France gave away her territories in the New World.

After the war, the British Parliament, hard pressed for money, decided to levy taxes on its colonies. The Sugar Act was enacted in 1764, and a year later the Stamp Act levied a tax on newspapers, pamphlets, legal documents and other papers. At this time the colonies, particularly Boston, suffered an economic depression, and resistance to the Stamp Act was immediate. The resulting riots caused Parliament, to repeal the tax. In 1766 Lincoln, along with other towns, celebrated the repeal of the Act. A new group of patriots played a major role in the resistance. Called the Sons of Liberty, they numbered among their members Paul Revere, Dr. Joseph Warren, Samuel Adams, and John Hancock, as well as many ordinary citizens.

During this period, the Town of Lincoln reflected the views of other towns in the colonies. Although not yet thinking of independence, they were gradually moving away from thinking of themselves as British subjects. When, in 1767, the British levied a new set of taxes called the Townshend Acts, opposition was strong. The Massachusetts House of Representatives denounced the Acts. Boston merchants called for a ban on imported goods. The Town of Lincoln debated support for this measure but finally took no action.

A section from the treasurer's Accounts in Lincoln, showing payment to Mary Flint for teaching school in 1765, before her marriage to Samuel Hartwell.

1764 Brought forward ————— 56 03 9

Jan<sup>21</sup> 1765 Paid M<sup>r</sup> Josiah Langdon for Keeping a  
Gram<sup>r</sup> School in Lincoln Four months in 1764 } 8 03 6 3/4  
Two months in the East School house & two

May 7 1765 Paid m<sup>r</sup> Joseph Willard for Keeping a Gram<sup>r</sup>  
School in W. Town Ten Weeks } 5 00 0

the Sum of ————— } 5 00 0

Sept 21 1765 Paid m<sup>rs</sup> Mary Flint for Keeping a School in  
the middle of y<sup>e</sup> Town six weeks the Sum of — } 1 00 0

Do Paid M<sup>rs</sup> Grace Mason for Keeping a School  
Six weeks in y<sup>e</sup> North School house the Sum of — } 1 00 0

July 10 1765 Paid m<sup>r</sup> Joseph Mason for Keeping a read  
writing School in y<sup>e</sup> South part of y<sup>e</sup> Town nine } 4 01 0  
weeks the Sum of —

Jan<sup>27</sup> 1766 Paid m<sup>r</sup> Joseph Willard For Keeping a School  
Twenty weeks twelve } 10 05 1 1/2  
thereof at y<sup>e</sup> East School house & eight in y<sup>e</sup> middle  
of y<sup>e</sup> Town the Sum of —

Sept 11 1766 Paid m<sup>r</sup> Joseph Willard for Keeping a Gram<sup>r</sup>  
School thirty two weeks twelve thereof at y<sup>e</sup> South } 16 08 2 1/2  
School house & ten at y<sup>e</sup> North School house & ten in  
in y<sup>e</sup> middle of y<sup>e</sup> Town the Sum of —

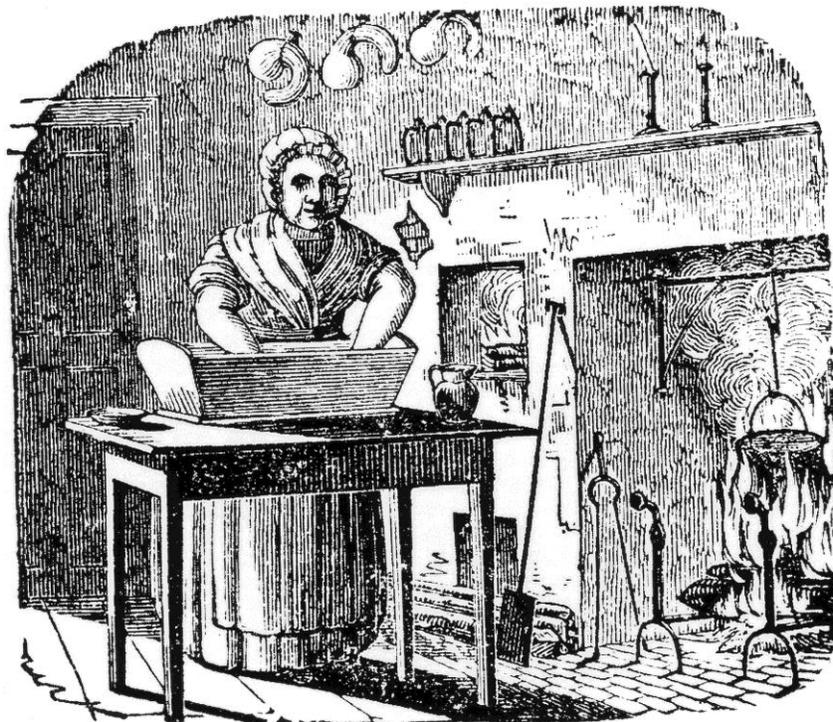
Feb<sup>10</sup> 1767 Paid m<sup>r</sup> Jacob Bigelow for Keeping a Gram<sup>r</sup>  
School in W. Town Four months, ten weeks thereof at } 8 17 9  
y<sup>e</sup> East School house & seven weeks & two Days at y<sup>e</sup> north

Figure 17 Treasurer's Accounts in Lincoln

The illustrations on this page show scenes of women's domestic lives in the 18<sup>th</sup> and early 19<sup>th</sup> centuries. Spinning Fabric is at the time that the colonies refused to import British goods. Making Bread is by the fireside.



*Figure 18 Spinning Fabric*



*Figure 19 Making Bread*

Again, the Sons of Liberty were at the center of the controversy. More rioting erupted, and this time the British responded with force. In 1768 a British fleet sailed into Boston Harbor. Two regiments of Regulars landed and marched into the town. The troops were to be quartered among the people, who strongly resented these soldiers. Incidents of violence between the soldiers and the townsmen increased. Finally, on March 5, 1770, taunted by angry residents, soldiers fired into the crowd, killing six people. The event, which became known as the Boston Massacre, was seized upon for propaganda purposes. On that same day at the Lincoln Town Meeting, residents finally voted to support the agreement of Boston merchants not to purchase imported goods.

In the midst of these momentous events, Mary Flint's personal life was changing. The year before, in 1769, she had married Samuel Hartwell. They settled on a farm provided to Samuel by his father, Ephraim Hartwell, who owned a tavern nearby. According to later town records, the farm consisted of a house, a barn, a blacksmith shop, about five acres each of tillage, mowing land, and pasture, plus one horse, three cows, six sheep and two swine. In 1770 the Hartwell's first child, Polly, was born.

After the Massacre, Parliament withdrew the Regulars and repealed the Townshend duties. Conflicts, however, continued to build. Each town appointed Committees of Correspondence to communicate and coordinate actions among the colonies. Meanwhile, in January 1773, a second child, Sally, was born to Mary and Samuel Hartwell. In that same month, the Lincoln Town Meeting considered a letter from Boston's Committee of Correspondence. Two weeks later, the Town Meeting approved a reply, supporting Boston's position in opposing British policies. Even if the actual words were cautious, it was the first time that Lincoln had expressed support for opposition.



*Figure 20 Landing of Royal Troops in Boston*

*“Two regiments of Regulars landed and marched into the town.” A history book illustration published in 1905.*



*Figure 21 Forging Arms for the Minute Men*

“...the farm consisted of a house, a barn, a blacksmith shop ...”

Although the Townshend Tax had been repealed, Parliament retained a tax on tea so small they thought that no one would object. They were wrong. When the ships carrying the tea landed in 1773, the colonies exploded in anger. In Boston the Sons of Liberty organized groups of men disguised as Indians who boarded the ships and emptied the tea into Boston Harbor --- The Boston Tea Party. In November Lincoln had established its own Committee of Correspondence. After the Tea Party in December, the town drafted another letter to “commend the spirited behavior of the town of Boston.”

Parliament responded to the Tea Party by closing the port of Boston, repealing the charter of Massachusetts, and abolishing town meetings. When the news of these measures reached Boston early in 1774, the colonists were outraged. The people of New England called them the Intolerable Acts, which was exactly what the colonists thought of them. In September of 1774 the Continental Congress, with representatives from the various colonies, met in Philadelphia to petition Parliament. The Congress, which lasted from September 5 until October 26, declared the Acts unconstitutional. In October members of the Lincoln Committee of Correspondence attended the First Provincial Congress in Concord, which created a Committee of Safety, authorized the towns to form special Minute Men companies, collected munitions and formed its own Treasury. The split with Britain was coming closer.

The Royal Governor of Massachusetts, General Thomas Gage, was also Commander in Chief of the British forces in the colonies. Gage had a network of spies at hand, colonists who, even at this time, still felt loyalty to the Crown. Throughout the colonies these Tories supplied the British with information about stores and munitions, as well as the activities of the patriots. The patriots also had spies, and each side had a pretty good idea of which was which. Gage was a cautious man, a moderate who felt that he and his troops were bound by the rule of law. He wished to avoid bloodshed. On the other hand, he was determined to preserve the authority of the British Crown. His problem was how to prevent a war; his solution, to disarm New England.

now since it must be granted that our Rights and Privileges are infringed, and that we have the Rights of Self Defence; the important Question is, by what means to make such Defence. Doubtless the means of Defence <sup>in all Cases</sup> ought to quadrate with the nature of the attack; and since the present plan seems to be to ensnare us above said we need only (had we virtue enough for that) to shun the Bale as we would shun the most deadly pison; notwithstanding considering so many are so habituated to the use of tea as perhaps inadvertantly to ruen themselves and Country thereby and others so abandand to vice expecting to share in the profits arising from the Ruen of their Country as to use all means in their power to encourage the use of tea, we cannot therefor but commend the spirited behaviour of the town of Boston in Endeavouring to prevent the Sale of the East India Companys teas by Endeavouring to perswade the consigners to Resign Their office, or any other Lawfull means and we judge the sd Consigners by refusing to comply with the just desire of their fellow Citizens have betrayed a greater Regard to their privat intrest then to the publick good and safety of their Country and ought to be treated accordingly.

Figure 22 Lincoln Town Meeting Letter

Below is a copy of part of the letter from Lincoln Town Meeting, December 20<sup>th</sup> 1773, replying to the Committee of Correspondence. This portion of the letter is transcribed in modern English, but with the old spellings.

Now since it must be granted that our Rights and Privileges are infringed, and that we have the Rights of self defence; the important question is, by what means to make such defence. Doubtless the means of defence in all cases ought to quadrate with the nature of the attack; and since the present plan seems to be to ensnare us above said we need only (had we virtue enough for that) to shun the Bale as we would shun the most deadly pison; notwithstanding considering so many are to habituated to the use of tea as perhaps inadvertantly to ruen themselves and country thereby and others so abandand to vice expecting to share in the profits arising from the ruen of their country as to use all means in their power to encourage the use of tea, we can not therefor but commend the spirited behavior of the town of Boston in endeavouring to prevent the sale of the East India Companys teas by endeavouring to perswade the consigners to resign their office or any other lawfull means and we judge the sd consigners by refusing to comply with the just desire of their fellow citizens have betrayed a greater regard to their privat intrest then to the publick good and safty of their country and ought to be treated accordingly.

The initial plan was to remove as many munitions as possible from the arsenals and powder houses of the region. The largest stock of gunpowder in New England was contained at the Provincial Powder house, just six miles northwest of Boston. During the summer of 1774, the surrounding towns had been gradually withdrawing their gunpowder from the Powder House and hiding it. On the first of September the British seized the Powder House. Secretly, they removed the remaining gunpowder and two brass field pieces that belonged to the Province of Massachusetts. The plan worked perfectly, except that it provoked a wild panic in New England known as the Powder Alarm. Alarmed by the anger his action had aroused in the countryside, Gage ordered the town of Boston to be closed and heavy cannon to be placed on Roxbury Neck, the narrow neck of land that connected Boston to the mainland.

Reacting to these drastic measures, the people of New England determined never again to be taken by surprise. With Paul Revere at the head, a committee was formed to gather information on the British movements. Early in December 1774, the British planned to capture a large supply of gunpowder and cannon at Fort William and Mary near the entrance to Portsmouth harbor in New Hampshire. The fort was guarded only by six British Soldiers. Warned of the plan in advance, a militia of New Hampshire men took possession of the fort, captured the six soldiers, and carried away the munitions. The British arrived too late.

In February 1775, Gage learned that a large stockpile of munitions was being gathered in the seaport town of Salem. British troops sailed from Boston and landed at Marblehead, the next town to Salem. Again, the mission was supposed to be kept secret, but the colonists learned of it anyway. While the soldiers marched from Marblehead to Salem, the colonists were busy removing the arms. The troops returned empty-handed.

As a cold, wet winter turned into a dreary spring, Gage considered a plan to strike at the town of Worcester, where a large supply of firearms was manufactured and stored. At the end of February, he sent two spies to scout the way. However, their report indicated that the distance was so great (forty miles) and the roads so difficult that success was unlikely. So, Gage turned his attention to Concord (only twenty miles from Boston), where the Provincial Congress had been meeting at Barrett's Farm, and where gunpowder and munitions were being assembled.

In mid-March Gage sent his spies to scout the roads to Concord. They left Boston by Roxbury, the only land connection, and traveled through Brookline and Weston. In Concord the two spies joined with the Tory Daniel Bliss, who provided them with detailed information about another way to Boston, a more northern route through Lexington and Menotomy, which is now Arlington. This route was longer but safer, and they recommended it to General Gage in their report. Now Gage could begin his preparations. The troops would be sent to Concord by the Lexington Road, which was called the Bay Road. Thus, was set in motion the sequence of events that led to the fateful day of April 19, 1775.

## Appendix B

### Historical Notes On The Play

The story of Mary Flint Hartwell is based mostly on oral history, and as is common with such histories, the accounts vary. Mary related the story to her grandchildren, who later passed it on to theirs. Drawn from these oral traditions, at least four differing versions of what happened at the Hartwell house were published between the 1870's and the 1930's.

How old Mary's grandchildren were when she told them the story of April 19<sup>th</sup> is uncertain. The grandsons presented in the play, George and Jonas, were the children of Mary and Samuel's youngest son, Samuel. George was born in 1819, and Jonas in 1821. In 1831 they would have been twelve and ten, respectively. Their grandfather, Samuel, died in 1829; it might be logical that their grandmother would tell them the story a couple of years later. Mary Ann Hartwell, born in 1830, who later married George M. Rogers, had also heard the story from her grandmother and repeated it to her children. In fact, Grandmother Mary probably told the story to each of her grandchildren at several different times, accounting for the later variances in stories.

One point of confusion is whether Samuel Prescott rode up to the Hartwell house itself, or to the blacksmith shop on the property, or to the neighboring Hartwell Tavern. He would have ridden through the woods to avoid the British patrol, and it is not unlikely that the Hartwell house was the first that he was able to reach. If he did not come to the Hartwell house, someone else brought the news to the Hartwells – possibly a slave of Ephraim Hartwell to whom Mary then handed the baby as she went off to warn Captain Smith. In any case it was clearly Mary who carried the news to William Smith. For the sake of cohesion and drama, I felt it was more effective to have Prescott arrive at the Hartwell house and by the kitchen door.

Another puzzle is the character of Sukey. It is not clear that Sukey ever existed. In only one account does she appear, and that account has her running off to the woods when she sees the soldiers. In some versions, a slave from up the road brought the news to the Hartwell and stayed with the children while Mary went to warn Captain Smith. In either case, someone needed to stay with the children when Mary left.

The route that Mary followed to the Smith house is uncertain – by the road, or through the fields? Again, accounts vary. It seemed to me that it made sense for her to choose the road, which she would have been able to follow even on a dark night.

Another question is what happened to Mary and her children between the time that the British passed her house on the way to Concord and the time that she rode behind the cart filled with the dead soldiers. She did see the troops on their way to Concord. In the play, those are her words describing the scene to her grandchildren. Afterwards, one version indicates that she gathered the children and drove the cart to her brother's farm before the British retreat. In another version she stayed, saw the British returning, and hid under the table with her children. At any rate, she did return to the farm the next day and did ride behind the cart filled with dead British soldiers, relating her thoughts as spoken in the play. The reference to Edmund Wheeler appears in the *Journal* of Henry David Thoreau, published in 1906.

The story of the wounded British officer, while basically true, has been altered slightly. The officer fell near the Smith house and was carried into that house and nursed for several days before he died. He was grateful to his caregivers and offered them a gold sovereign, which Catherine Smith found sewn into his coat when he was buried. He was never in the Hartwell house, but it's a good story and offers another view of the relationship between the colonists and the soldiers. James Parks and William Hosmer were Lincoln Minute Men who indeed fought on April 19<sup>th</sup>, although they were not actually involved with the British officer.

For purposes of simplicity, I have placed all the action in the Hartwell kitchen. However, not all the events would have taken place in this one room. In 1775 the Hartwell house had three main first-floor rooms, two front rooms on either side of the central fireplace, and a kitchen along the back. Each of the front rooms would have had a door to the kitchen, entering on either side of the kitchen fireplace. The main front room used by the family would have had several side chairs, perhaps an armchair, a main table and possibly a smaller tea table. China and other items might be in a corner cupboard. The fireplace would have andirons and probably tongs. The second front room might have been more formal with the finest furniture, maybe a clock (one of Hartwell's trades), a desk and some books. The kitchen would be simpler with older furniture, an old table, a wool and flax wheel or loom. The fireplace would have an array of utensils, such as a spit, toasters and trivets, iron and brass kettles and skillets, tea kettle, andirons, tongs, warming pan. There would have been some pewter ware or woodenware or earthenware, and candlesticks. For that time, it was a comfortable and well-equipped house.

The episode of the broken musket appears in a least two sources and is a tradition in the Hartwell family. The musket itself remained in the family for several generations and was then donated to the Lexington Historical Society. While it may seem unlikely that a British Soldier would give up his musket or that the musket would break, that is the tale which has been handed down over the years.

A final question is Mary's birth date, which is listed differently in different places. Concord records (Lincoln was still a part of Concord when she was born) list her birth on March 22, 1747, as does the Flint genealogy, while the Hartwell genealogy lists her date as April 2, 1748. On the other hand, when she died in the summer of 1846, she was said to be ninety-eight years old, suggesting 1748 rather than 1747. The answer is that in the early 1750's the colonists switched from using the old Julian calendar to the Gregorian calendar. Their year normally began on March 25<sup>th</sup> (Conception Day), and many of their records double date from January 1 to March 24. So, Mary was actually born on March 22, 1747/8, that is, March 22, 1748, by our modern reckoning. That is the date I have used.

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## Credits for Illustrations

Page	Title	Illustration Credit
1	Front Cover	Sheila Williams
2	Map	Roger Gordy
7	Hartwell Tavern	<i>An Account of the Celebration by the Town of Lincoln, Mass<sup>ts</sup> April 23<sup>rd</sup>, 1904, of the 150<sup>th</sup> Anniversary of its Incorporation 1754 – 1904</i> (Lincoln, Printed for the Town, 1905), facing p. 38
8	Kitchen	Private Collection.
12	The Regulars are Coming	Illustration by Edwin A. Abbey for Frederic Hudson, “The Concord Fight,” <i>Harper’s New Monthly Magazine</i> , Vol 50 (May 1975), p. 783.
13	To Arms, To Arms, The War has Begun	Illustration by A. Bobbett for Benjamin J. Lossing, <i>Our Country</i> , Vol 3 (New York, 1905), p.779.
15	A Minute Man Preparing for War	Illustration by Felix O. C. Darley for Benjamin J. Lossing, <i>Our Country</i> , Vol. 3 (New York, 1905) facing p. 774.
16	British Retreat	Private Collection.
18	Treasurer's Accounts from the Town of Lincoln	“The Book of Treasurers Accompts in Lincoln, 1755 (-1788),” Lincoln Public Library Collection, Lincoln, Massachusetts.
19	Lincoln Minute Man Company, April 19, 1775	Data from John C. MacLean, <i>A Rich harvest: The History, Buildings and People of Lincoln, Massachusetts</i> (Lincoln: Lincoln Historical Society, 1987), table 9.1.
21	Hearse	Illustration by Robbins for Abram English Brown, <i>Beneath Old Roof Trees</i> (Boston, 1896), facing p. 226.
23	Hartwell Graves	Photograph by Suzanna Collins, December 1994.
23	British Grave	Photograph by Suzanna Collins, December 1994.
24	Flint Homestead	<i>An Account of the Celebration by the Town of Lincoln, Mass<sup>ts</sup> April 23<sup>rd</sup>, 1904, of the 150<sup>th</sup> Anniversary of its Incorporation 1754 – 1904</i> (Lincoln, Printed for the Town, 1905), facing p.108.
25	Minute Men March	Courtesy of the Lincoln Minute Men. Photograph by Clive Russ.
25	Descendants at Cemetery	Courtesy of the Flint family.
26	Map of Hartwell Farms	Map from Joyce Lee Malcolm. <i>The Scene of the Battle 1775, Historic Grounds Report, Minute Man National Historical Park</i> . (National Park Service, United States Department of the Interior, 1985.
28	Treasurer's Accounts in Lincoln	“The Book of Treasurers Accompts in Lincoln, 1755 (-1788),” Lincoln Public Library Collection, Lincoln, Massachusetts.
29	Spinning Fabric	Illustration by A. Bobbett for Benjamin J. Lossing, <i>Our Country: A History of the United States from the Discovery of America to the Present Time</i> , Vol. 3 (New York 1905), p. 668.
29	Making Bread	Illustration from <i>Marmaduke Multiply</i> (Boston, 1845). Courtesy of the Society for the Preservation of New England Antiquities.
30	Landing of Royal Troops in Boston	Illustration by Felix O. C. Darley for Benjamin J. Lossing, <i>Our Country</i> , Vol. 3 (New York, 1905) facing p. 664.
31	Forging Arms for the Minute Men	Illustration by Felix O. C. Darley for Benjamin J. Lossing, <i>Our Country</i> , Vol. 3 (New York, 1905) facing p. 726.
32	Lincoln Town Meeting Letter	Lincoln Town meeting, December 20, 1773, “Lincoln First Book of Records, April the 23d 1754 (-1806),” Lincoln Public Library Collection, Lincoln, Massachusetts.

## About the Author

Palmer Faran began her association with the literary world working in the preparation of high school textbooks for a major publishing firm in Boston, where she also lived for many years.

Soon after moving to the rural town of Lincoln, Palmer became co-editor of a local magazine, *The Lincoln Review*. She has been involved in many town activities, including serving on the Lincoln Planning Board. She is presently a member of the Board of the Lincoln Historical Society.

“One of the interesting parts of preparing this book,” said the author, “was assembling the illustrations and captions. My time spent at American Heritage doing this type of work was helpful.”

“I have always been interested in those people who haven’t made it into the history books, the stories of ordinary men and women caught up in events over which they have no control. The fact that Mary Flint Hartwell was a local figure, a Lincoln person, meant that she was particularly significant to me. I have often walked or ridden my horse along the edge of the Flint Fields and thought of the many people who have walked these paths before me.”

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# Heroine of the Battle Road

## Back Cover

One early Spring morning in 1775, a young woman watched from her window, searching for evidence of impending danger. Mary Flint Hartwell lived in Lincoln, a small town like many other farming communities on the outskirts of Boston. As the wife of a Lincoln Minute Man, Mary knew something was about to happen. Before the day was over, she would become a witness and participant in a series of events, which would alter the course of history

By April of 1775, a series of explosive conflicts had occurred in the American Colonies—the Boston Massacre, the Boston Tea Party, and others that alienated the colonists from their mother country, England. Heroine of the Battle Road captures the patriotism, bravery and emotions of a young mother of three small children who responded to the call to warn her neighbors of the approach of British soldiers. Without regard for her own safety, Mary Hartwell ventured into the night to take up the alarm that Paul Revere had carried until his capture by a British patrol.

This captivating, historical drama takes you back in time and allows you to share in the lives of real people who found themselves embroiled in events leading the birth of a nation.