

## **British Accounts**

### **Lt. William Sutherland**

#### **British Officer, 38<sup>th</sup> Regiment of Foot**

“...about 2 in the Morning of the 19<sup>th</sup> we marched...the Tide being in we were up to our middles before we got into the road continued for about 4 mile without meeting with any person when I heard Lt. Adair of the Marines...call out, here are 2 fellows galloping express to Alarm the Country, on which I immediately rode up to them, Seized one of them & our guide the other, dismounted them &...gave them in charge to the men, A little after we were joined by Lt. Grant of the Royal Artillery who told us the Country, he was afraid was alarmed, of which we had little reason to doubt as we heard several shot being then between 3 & 4 in the morning (a very unusual time for firing) when we were joined by Major Mitchell, Capt. Cochrane, Capt. Lumm, & several other Gentlemen who told us the whole country was alarmed & had galloped for their lives...that they had taken Paul Revierre but was obliged to let him go after having cut his girths and stirrups...A little after I met a very genteel man riding in a carriage they call a Sulky who assured me there were 600 men assembled at Lexington with a view of opposing us...it began new to be day light, and we met some men with a wagon of wood who told us there were odds of 1000 men in arms at Lexington and added that they would fight us...When we came up to the main body (colonists) who were drawn up in the plain opposite to the Church when several officers called out ‘Throw down your arms & you shall come by no harm.’ or words to that effect which they refusing to do, instantaneously the Gentlemen (British Officers) who were on horseback rode in amongst them at which time I heard Major Pitcairn’s voice call out ‘Soldiers don’t fire! Keep your ranks and form and surround them!’ instantly some of the villains were got over the hedge, fired at us, & and it was then & not before that the Soldiers fired...On my coming up Colonel Smith turned to me, asked me, ‘Do you know where a Drummer is?’ which I found, whom the Colonel immediately ordered to beat to arms...the firing immediately ceased on our side, Colonel Smith ordered that the men should replenish the upper part of their Cartridge boxes with ammunition.

### **Lt. John Barker, 4<sup>th</sup> Reg't of Foot**

At 2 o'clock we began our march by wading through a very long ford up to our middles: after going a few miles we took 3 or 4 people who were going off to give intelligence; about 5 miles on this side of a town called Lexington which lay in our road, we heard there were some hundreds of people collected together intending to oppose us and stop our going on; at 5 o'clock we arrived there and saw a number of people, I believe 2 and 3 hundred, formed on a common in the middle of the town; we still continued advancing, keeping prepared against an attack tho' without intending to attack them, but on our coming near them they fired one or two shots, upon which our men without any orders rushed in upon them, fired and put 'em to flight; several of them were killed, we could not tell how many because they were got behind walls and into the woods; We had a man of the 10th Light Infantry wounded, nobody else hurt. We then formed upon the common but with some difficulty, the men were so wild they could hear no orders; we waited a considerable time there and at length proceeded on our way to Concord, which we then learnt was our destination, in order to destroy a magazine of stores collected there.

### **Ensign Jeremy Lister, 10<sup>th</sup> Reg't of Foot**

We got all over the bay and landed on the opposite shore betwixt twelve and one o'clock and was at first through some swamps and slips of the sea till we got into the road leading to Lexington soon after which the Country people begun to fire their alarm guns, light their Beacons, to raise the Country, however to the best of my recollection about 4 o'clock in the morning being the 19th of April the 5 front companies was ordered to load which we did, about half an hour after we found that precaution had been necessary, for we had to unload again and then was the first Blood drawn in this American Rebellion. It was at Lexington when we saw one of their Companies drawn up in regular order Major Pitcairn, of the Marines second in Command call'd to them to disperse, but their not seeming willing he desired us to mind our space which we did when they gave a fire then run off to get behind a wall. We had one man wounded of our Company in the leg his name was Johnson also Major Pitcairn's horse was shot in the flank, we returned their salute, and before we proceeded on our march from Lexington I believe we kill'd and wounded either 7 or 8 men.

### **Major John Pitcairn, Marines**

...when we were advanced within about two miles of Lexington, intelligence was received that about 500 men in arms were assembled, determined to oppose the Kings troops, and retard them in their march. On this intelligence, I mounted my horse, and galloped up to the six Light Companies. When I arrived at the head of the advance Company, two officers came and informed me, that a man of the rebels advanced from those that were assembled, had presented his musket and attempted to shoot them, but the piece flashed in the pan. On this I gave directions to the troops to move forward, but on no account to fire, or even attempt it without orders; when I arrived at the end of the Village, I observed drawn up upon a Green near 200 rebels; when I came within about 100 yards of them, they began to file off towards some stone walls on our right flank. The Light Infantry, observing this, ran after them. I instantly called to the soldiers not to fire, but surround and disarm them, and after several repetitions of those positive orders to the men, not to fire, etc. some of the rebels who had jumped over the wall fired four or five shots at the soldiers, which wounded a man of the Tenth and my horse was wounded in two places, from some quarter or other, and at the same time several shots were fired from a meeting house on our left. Upon this, without any order or regularity, the Light Infantry began a scattered fire, and continued in that situation for some little time, contrary to the repeated orders both of me and the officers that were present..

## **Lexington Depositions**

**John Robbins**

**April 25, 1775**

“...there suddenly appeared a number of the King’s Troops, about sixty or seventy yards from us, huzzaing and on a quick pace towards us, with three officers in their front on horseback...the foremost of which cried, ‘Throw down your arms, ye villains, ye rebels;’ upon which said company dispersing, the foremost of the three officers ordered their men, saying ‘Fire, by God, fire; at which moment we received a very heavy and close fire from them; at which instant, being wounded, I fell, and several of our men were shot dead by one volley. Capt. Parker’s men, I believe, had not then fired a gun.”

**John Parker, Captain**

**Lexington Militia**

**April 25, 1775**

“...ordered our Militia to meet on the common in said Lexington, to consult what to do, and concluded not to be discovered, nor meddle or make with said Regular Troops (if they should approach) unless they should insult us; and upon their sudden approach, I immediately ordered our Militia to disperse and not to fire. Immediately said troops made their appearance, and rushed furiously, fired upon and killed eight of our party, without receiving any provocation therefore from us.

**John Munroe**

**December 28, 1824**

“...the British troops appeared within twelve or fifteen rods of our line. They continued their march to within about eight rods of us, when an officer on horseback...exclaimed, ‘Lay down your arms, and disperse, you rebels!’ Finding our company kept their ground, Col. Smith ordered his troops to fire...I thought, and so stated to Ebenezer Munroe, Jun. who stood next to me on the left, that they had fired nothing but powder; but, on the second firing, Munroe said, they had fired something more than powder, for he had received a wound in his arm; and now, said he...’I’ll give them the guts of my gun.’ We both took aim at the main body of the British troops...and discharged our pieces.”

**Joseph Underwood**

**March 7, 1825**

“When the regulars had arrived within about one hundred rods of our line, they charged their pieces, and then moved toward us at a quick step. Some of our men, on seeing them, proposed to quit the field, but Capt. Parker gave orders for every man to stand his ground, and said he would order the first man shot, that offered to leave his post. I stood very near Capt. Parker, when the regulars came up, and am confident he did not order his men to disperse, till the British troops had fired upon us the second time.