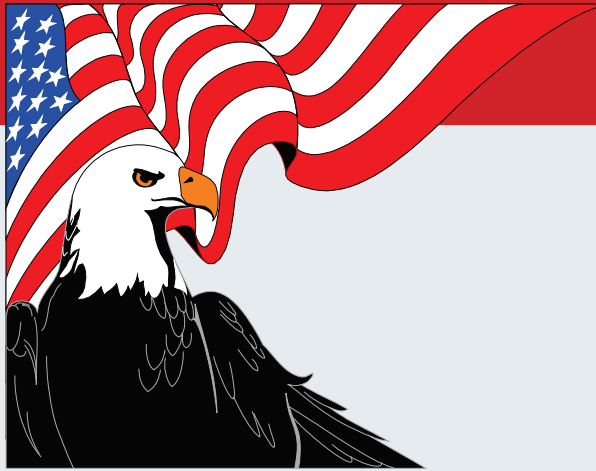


# PATRIOTS DAY



Compliments of  
**The Georgia Society  
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*For Information Contact:*



**Concord Hymn  
– Ralph Waldo Emerson**

By the rude bridge that arched the flood,  
Their flag to April's breeze unfurled,  
Here once the embattled farmers stood,  
And fired the shot heard round the world.

The foe long since in silence slept;  
Alike the conqueror silent sleeps;  
And Time the ruined bridge has swept  
Down the dark stream which seaward creeps.

On this green bank, by this soft stream,  
We set to-day a votive stone;  
That memory may their deed redeem,  
When, like our sires, our sons are gone.

Spirit that made those heroes dare  
To die, or leave their children free,  
Bid Time and Nature gently spare  
The shaft we raise to them and thee.

## APRIL 19

# CELEBRATE PATRIOTS DAY APRIL 19<sup>TH</sup>

by E. James Adkins

Permission to reprint Mr. Adkins letter granted by Wynter Copeland

We don't celebrate the 19<sup>th</sup> of April anymore. It was never celebrated in a big monumental way, but we once celebrated that day.

*"Hardly a man is now alive  
Who remembers that famous day and year."  
— so wrote Longfellow in his poem that begins:  
"Listen my children and you shall hear  
Of the midnight ride of Paul Revere,"*

Revere and others went forth on the night of April 18, 1775 with the alarm, "The redcoats are coming!" They rode all through the night.

*"It was one by the village clock,  
When he galloped into Lexington."  
"It was two by the village clock  
When he came to the bridge in Concord town."*

Why was it so immediately important, on the night of April 18, 1775, for all of the people to know that the "redcoats are coming"?

It was the practice in our colonial period for each village to have a "common" or "village green" that was used for public gatherings. The most significant use of the "common" was as a mustering point and drill field for the village militia, "every able bodied man between the ages of 16 and 60 years." The militia was trained (as they termed it, "disciplined" and "well regulated") in the use of arms, here at the village green. The militia provided protection for individuals and property of the village against all threats. A man would spend some time in the "gaol" if he missed a militia call. The militia, each man, was required to keep and bear his own arms. It was common for the militia to maintain a community armory for the storage of shot, powder, flint, additional small arms and any heavy arms that it might afford. Individuals could draw from these supplies as needed, as well as acquiring their own private supplies.

On the night of April 18, 1775, Governor Gage (British Governor of fortress Boston) ordered British "redcoats" to march to the many surrounding villages to seize and

destroy all stores of munitions and to arrest the country leaders, the "arch-conspirators." British Major Pitcairn led the march into the countryside. The prime objective was to still the voice of the people, disarm them and make them more servile. Rebellion must stop, they said.

So, Revere took to horse to give the alarm: "To arms, to arms, the redcoats are coming!"

Early on the morning of the 19<sup>th</sup> of April, 1775, Major Pitcairn's "redcoats" arrived at Lexington and met Captain John Parker's company of colonial militia drawn-up on the meeting house green.

*"By the rude bridge that arched the flood,  
Their flag to April's breeze unfurled,  
Hence once the embattled farmers stood  
And fired the shot heard round the world."  
— so wrote Emerson in 1837.*

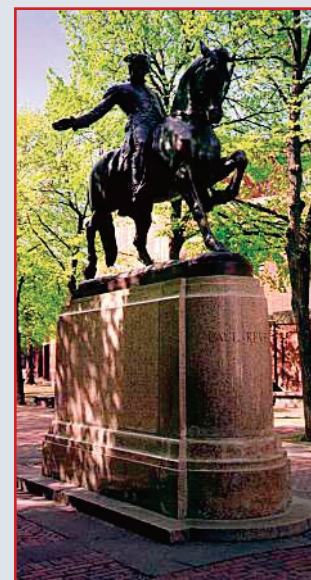
Some colonials were wounded and some were killed. Resistance to the large British force proved futile. Pitcairn's return march to Boston became a humiliating rout as our colonial militiamen, Minutemen and individual countrymen harassed the British column from behind stone walls, rocks and trees, every step of the way.

The shot heard round the world, the first shot in our fight for independence from King George's slavery, was fired to protect and defend the natural right of men to protect themselves, to keep and bear arms for the purpose of preserving liberty. This right to keep and bear arms was codified on the 15<sup>th</sup> of December 1791 when it became the Second Amendment to the Constitution of the United States of America.

We don't celebrate the 19<sup>th</sup> of April anymore. Perhaps we should.

*"That memory may their deed redeem,  
When, like our sires, our sons are gone.  
Spirit, that make those heroes dare  
To die, and leave their children free."  
— Emerson, 1837*

**(Patriots Day is a state holiday in Massachusetts)**



## April 19, 1775 *The shot heard 'round the world'*

Warned by Paul Revere, William Dawes and Samuel Prescott, the Massachusetts militia mobilized to block a larger, better trained British force coming to seize militia weapons at Concord.

At Lexington, Major John Pitcairn, leading a detachment of Royal Marines told the colonists there: "Disperse, you rebels! Damn you, throw down your arms, and disperse!"

Nobody knows who fired the first shot at Lexington Green, but the colonial militia refused confiscation of their guns and the British drove them back in the initial encounter.

After regrouping, the colonial militia did better, turning back the British at Concord Bridge and forcing a disorderly British flight back to Boston. The road back became a deadly gauntlet as farmers from "every Middlesex village and farm" sniped from behind stone walls, trees, barns, houses, all the way back to Charlestown peninsula.

By nightfall, the British survivors were safe under the protection of the Royal Navy and British Army at Boston, having lost 273 men that day, while the Americans lost 95.

The following year, the colonial Americans declared independence, a date now marked as July 4<sup>th</sup>, a national holiday.

Months after participating in the actions at Lexington and Concord, a former slave, a black African named Salem Prince was introduced to General George Washington as the sharpshooter who killed Major Pitcairn at Bunker Hill (June 1775).

## NATIONAL PATRIOT DAY

On September 11, 2001, more than 3000 innocent people lost their lives when a calm September morning was shattered by terrorists driven by hatred and destruction. On December 18, 2001 the Congress designated September 11 of each year as "Patriot Day".

(Public Law 107-89)