

# The origin of Patriots Day: Truth and myth

by Roland Hallee

*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.*

Those words from the Midnight Ride of Paul Revere, the famous poem written by Henry Wadsworth Longfellow in 1860, probably brought more confusion about that infamous night than history remembers.

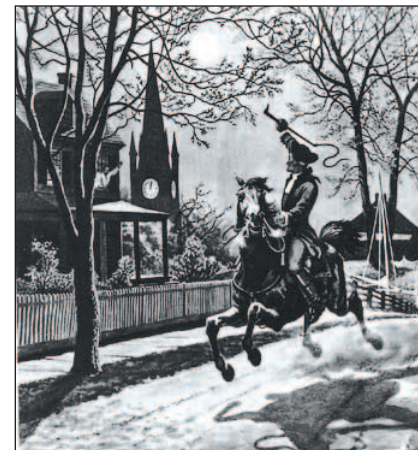


1813 portrait of Paul Revere by Gilbert Stuart.

Longfellow's poem was never designed to be history and there are few serious historians today who would maintain that Revere was anything like the lone-wolf rider portrayed in the poem.

Paul Revere was baptized on January 1, 1735, (probably born in late December, 1734) and was an American silversmith and a patriot in the American Revolution.

He was celebrated after his death for his role as a messenger just before the battles of Lexington and Concord, and Revere's name and his "midnight ride" are well-known in the United States as a patriotic symbol. On the night of April 18-19, he and William Dawes were instructed by Dr. Joseph Warren to ride from Boston to Lexington to warn John Hancock and Samuel Adams of the movements of the British Army, which was beginning a march from Boston to Lexington, ostensibly to arrest Hancock and Adams, and seize the weapons stored in Concord.



Paul Revere's ride.

The British Army (known as the King's Regulars) had been stationed in Boston since the ports were closed in the wake of the Boston Tea Party, and was under constant surveillance by Revere and other patriots as word began to spread that they were planning a move. On the night of April 18, 1775, the army began its move across the Charles River toward Lexington, and the Sons of Liberty immedi-

ately went into action. At about 11 p.m., Revere was sent by Dr. Warren across the Charles River to Charlestown, on the opposite shore, where he could begin his ride to Lexington, while Dawes was sent the long way around, via the Boston Neck and the land route to Lexington.

marked "Revere's Ride." The full ride used Main Street in Charlestown, Broadway and Main Street in Somerville, Main Street and High Street in Medford, to Arlington center, and Massachusetts Avenue the rest of the way. For a long time historians of the American Revolution, as well as textbook writers, relied almost entirely on Longfellow's poem as historical evidence, creating substantial misconceptions in the

County carrying the news. Revere's actual warning that night was "The Regulars are coming out." The famous "The British are coming," was never uttered by Revere because many of the colonial residents were legally British subjects. Revere arrived in Lexington around midnight and Adams and Hancock were staying at the Hancock-Clarke House, discussing plans of action. Revere and Dawes were joined by Dr. Samuel Prescott on their way to Concord, but were detained by British troops in Lincoln. Prescott and Dawes escaped. Revere was questioned and then escorted at gunpoint by three British officers back toward Lexington.

As morning broke, and they neared the Lexington Meeting House, shots were heard. The British officers became alarmed, confiscated Revere's horse, and rode toward the Meeting House. Revere was horseless, and walked through a cemetery and pastures until he came to Rev. Clarke's house where Hancock and Adams were staying. As the battle on Lexington Green continued, Revere helped Hancock and his family escape from Lexington. Thus, the American Revolution was officially underway.

The warning delivered by the three riders successfully allowed the militia to repel the British troops in Concord, who were harried by guerrilla fire along the road back to Boston. Prescott knew the countryside well, even in the dark, and arrived at Concord in time to warn the people there.

Today, parts of the ride are posted with signs

## The female Paul Revere

Sybil Ludington (April 5, 1761 - February 26, 1839) was a heroine of the American Revolutionary War; known for her night ride on April 26, 1777, to alert American colonial forces, similar to that performed by Paul Revere, only she rode more than twice the distance of Revere. She was 16 years old at the time. She was the eldest of Henry Ludington's 12 children and was often responsible for looking after her younger siblings. On the night of April 26, 1777, she was putting them to bed when her family received word that British troops had begun burning Danbury, Connecticut, which was only 25 miles away. Her father's troops were scattered over a large area around the house, and Sybil convinced her father to let her ride to warn them.



A statue of Sybil Ludington, sculpted by Anna Hyatt Huntington, was erected in Carmel, New York, in 1961.

men to Long Island Sound.

Sybil was congratulated for her heroism by friends and neighbors, and also by Gen. George Washington.

After the war, in 1784, Sybil married Edmund Ogden. They had one child, Henry. She was 77 years old when she died on February 26, 1839, in Unadilla, New York. She is buried in Patterson, New York.

marked "Revere's Ride." The full ride used Main Street in Charlestown, Broadway and Main Street in Somerville, Main Street and High Street in Medford, to Arlington center, and Massachusetts Avenue the rest of the way.

For a long time historians of the American Revolution, as well as textbook writers, relied almost entirely on Longfellow's poem as historical evidence, creating substantial misconceptions in the

PATRIOTS DAY - Continued on page 15

**SUBWAY**  
eat fresh  
5 Old Point Avenue  
Madison 696-4400  
**FOOT LONG SUBS**

**MAINE VETERANS' HOMES**  
310 Cony Rd., Augusta, ME  
Caring for those who served  
Kathleen Chase, RN, BSN  
Admissions coordinator  
207-622-2454  
1-888-684-4664  
KCHASE@MAINEVETERANSHOMES.ORG  
WWW.MAINEVETERANSHOMES.ORG

**VARNEY'S AUTO SALES & FAIRVIEW ESTATES**  
Rte. 3, No. Belfast Ave.,  
Augusta  
**623-5270**

**NORTH COUNTRY HARLEY-DAVIDSON CYCLES**  
3099 No. Belfast Ave., Augusta  
622-7994  
1-800-934-1653  
www.northcountryhd.com

**George's BANANA STAND**  
The "Wright" Place to Shop  
No. Ave., Skowhegan  
474-3121  
Open 7 days:  
Mon-Sun 8 am to 8 pm  
WWW.GEORGESBANANASTAND.COM

**AMERICAN LEGION**  
Malcolm-Glidden  
Post 163  
Palermo  
THANK YOU FOR YOUR SUPPORT OF AMERICAN LEGION PROGRAMS

**Border Trust**  
Corporate Headquarters  
227 Water St., Augusta  
622-0038  
South China (207) 445-4865  
Augusta (207) 629-5456  
Jackman (207) 668-2251  
Topsham (207) 729-1426

**Mid-Maine Internal Medicine**  
Specializing in  
Comprehensive Health Care of Adults From Preventive Medicine to Intensive Care  
No. Vassalboro/Winslow  
John Burke, M.D.  
Clifton Smith, M.D.  
Nancy Episcopo, M.D.  
David Preston, M.D.  
Erika Hull, PA-C  
207-873-6173

**TOBEY'S grocery**  
"your convenient grocery store"  
www.tobeysgrocery.com  
1408 Rt. 3 • South China, ME  
993-2596 • FAX: 993-2053

**ADAMS REALTY**  
B 207-445-4323  
Cell 207-649-7981  
PO Box 175  
South China ME 04358  
Lucas Adams-Gri  
Associate Broker  
E-mail: adamsrealty@pivot.net  
www.adamsrealtyme.com

**Ballard Meats & Seafood**  
"We Take Pride in Serving You"  
FRESH Lobsters & Seafood Year Round  
(207) 622-9764  
1-800-564-6328  
fax 621-0242  
55 Myrtle St., Manchester ME

**FERRIS VARIETY**  
Established 1935  
Main Street, North Vassalboro  
SPECIAL - DELI - SANDWICHES  
\$8.99 - PIZZA KITS  
• 5 Shells  
• 1 lb. cheese  
• pint sauce  
872-8861  
Open: 7 Days a Week 8 am to 9 pm  
Sunday & Monday 'til 8 pm

**Yeaton's Service and Supply**  
Serving Albion and neighboring communities with distinction for 77 years!  
Main Street, Albion  
437-2575

**GROVER HINCKLEY AMERICAN LEGION POST 14**  
KARAOKE AND DANCING  
Every Friday Night 7 pm to 12 am  
BANQUET HALL RENTAL AVAILABLE  
86 Main St., Fairfield, ME  
04937 • 453-2567

**THE MARKET & DELI**  
306 Rt. 3 • South China, ME  
445-2890 • FAX: 445-3406  
**QuickStop**  
190 Rt. 3 • South China, ME  
445-5582

**North Country POWERSPORTS**  
YAMAHA Kawasaki  
• New & Used Vehicles  
• Parts & Accessories  
• Next Day U.P.S.  
• Factory Trained Service Technicians  
• Financing - Same Day Credit Approval  
907 Kennedy Memorial Drive  
Oakland, ME 04963  
(207) 465-2513

**Natanis GOLF COURSE**  
Maine's Only 36 Hole Golf Course  
Webber Pond Road  
Vassalboro, Maine  
04989 • 622-3561

**LAUNDROMAT CHINA AREA WASH & DRY**  
Wash, Dry & Fold Service  
LARGE CAPACITY WASHERS NOW AVAILABLE  
SELF STORAGE AVAILABLE UNITS  
5x5 - 5x10 - 10x15  
445-3422  
937 Rte. 3, South China  
8 am to 9 pm, 7 days a week

**S.O. Childs & SONS EXCAVATION**  
Sand • Gravel • Loam  
Crushed Material  
Septic Systems  
Roads  
Land Preparation  
Stephen Childs | Scott Childs  
993-2429 | 993-2096  
cell 441-5744  
PALERMO, ME

**LAPOINTE LUMBER CO., INC.**  
2385 North Belfast Ave.,  
Augusta, ME 04330  
Lumber (207) 622-5025  
Office (207) 622-7400  
1-800-287-5025  
www.lapointelumber.com

**DECKER~SIMMONS AMERICAN LEGION ~ POST 51**  
OAKLAND, MAINE  
"Serving Oaklands Veterans and the Community since 1926"  
Banquet Hall Available for Rent  
Please call 465-2446  
Sun. 12 to 9 pm • Mon. and Wed. 3 to 9 pm  
Tues. 3 to 10 pm • Fri. 12 pm to 1 am • Sat. 12 pm to 12 am

**Larsen Masonry**  
Free Estimates ~ Fully Insured  
FIREPLACES • CHIMNEY TOPS  
BLOCK CHIMNEYS • STONEMASONRY  
RE-LINING • RE-POINTING  
STEPS AND STAIRS  
Allan Larsen, Owner  
207-872-6050  
Cell 207-557-0759  
17 Louise Avenue,  
Waterville, ME 04901

**McGrillis Rousseau • VFW Post #8835**  
175 Veterans Drive, Winslow, ME 04901  
**Banquet Facility**  
Able to Accommodate up to 330 people Call 872-9850  
Weddings • Dances • Reunions • Family Gatherings  
Trade Shows and More  
**Bingo**  
Tuesdays at 6:30 & Sundays at 6:00 - Info: Call 873-1908  
**SUPER BINGO** - 1st Sunday of Every Month  
Pays State Maximum plus Winner Take All

**LAKESIDE COUNTRY STORE**  
OPEN 24 HOURS/7 DAYS  
NOW OFFERING DIESEL FUEL  
1390 Lakeview Dr., China ME 04358  
968-3663 • 968-2222

*The Town Line Newspaper*  
Honoring those who sacrificed for our Freedom  
PO Box 89 South China 04358  
445-2234

**Waterville VFW**  
Forest J. Pare Post 1285  
51 Water Street,  
Waterville, 04901  
873-0908  
**"Veterans Remembering Veterans"**

**AMULET COUNTRY STORE**  
200 Unity Road,  
Albion, ME  
437-2118

**Ray Haskell Ford**  
Used Car Super Store  
CHECK OUT OUR SERVICE SAVINGS  
"where you always get the BEST DEAL"  
801 Kennedy Mem. Dr.  
PO Box 247  
Oakland, Maine 04963  
Check out our inventory at www.RayHaskellFLM.com  
Present this ad upon arrival. After completed purchase of any new or pre-owned vehicle we will donate \$200 to your favorite charity or community event.