

AMERICAN SPRING

SUPER TITLE:

Boston, July 20, 1774

Corporal OWEN TOLLIVER, 23, stands leaning on the rail of HMS Somerset, 64-gun ship of the line, anchored in Boston Harbor several hundred yards from the dockside. Redcoats are getting into longboats and being rowed ashore. The captain of his company, CAPTAIN BALFOUR, SERGEANT LAMB and other soldiers are waiting to disembark. Owen is talking to his friend, Private REGGIE HARRIS. Owen is excited and enthusiastic.

OWEN

It's a fine lookin' town, don't you think, Reggie.

REGGIE

It does look like a fine town, Owen.

OWEN

And I'll bet its full of pretty girls waitin' to be impressed by soldiers of such a famous regiment as ours.

REGGIE

I hope so, Owen. I've seen few enough since I joined the army.

OWEN

Aye. I joined the army three years ago, and I've barely spoken to a real girl since. I used to know lots of girls before, back in Bristol. I miss havin' a pretty face just to talk to now and then, you know.

REGGIE

Well, there was always Madam Dora and her girls, back in Portsmouth.

OWEN

Ah, you can have your whores, Reggie. They're not for me.

Reggie rolls his eyes and makes an amused expression of disbelief.

OWEN (continued)

No, I have a good feeling about this place, Reggie. I think I'm going to like it here.

REGGIE

I've heard there's been trouble between the people here and the army. I hear that's why they're sending us here.

OWEN

Oh, that's just soldiers' talk, Reggie. The people here are English, just like you and me. We're here to protect 'em from the savage Indians and the French.

REGGIE

I don't think there are any Frenchies left in America, Owen. Not for ten years and more.

OWEN

Well, they might try to come back. And there's plenty of bloody Indians! My brother, Jamie, was killed by some in Canada last year.

REGGIE

You never told me that, Owen.

OWEN

Well, he was. Him and his wife and his two little boys on their farm just ten miles outside of Quebec City. Near broke my mother's heart.

COLONEL MADDISON, colonel of Owen's regiment, the Fourth Light Infantry, appears at the railing of the poop deck and calls down to Captain Balfour.

COLONEL MADDISON

Captain Balfour. Get your men in the boats now.

BALFOUR

All right, Company C! Line up now!

EXT. BOSTON HARBOR - DAY

Owen and Reggie and 10 other redcoats are being rowed to the dockside. Three officers, General THOMAS GAGE, commander of all British forces in North America, is on the dock talking with COLONEL SMITH, a stout, pompous officer, and COLONEL LESLIE.

OWEN

That must be General Gage, Reggie. I was talking to a fellow in the grenadiers company who fought under him in the French war, and said he was a first rate officer, brave and cool under fire. He looks like he knows what he's about.

EXT. ON THE PIER OF BOSTON HARBOR - DAY

Gage and his officers observe the troops disembarking.

GAGE

Well, gentlemen, they're fine looking soldiers. It's a famous regiment, you know, the 4th Foot, the King's Own Regiment. God knows we need them.

LESLIE

This should give us close to 3000 troops in Boston, General.

GAGE

It may not be enough, gentlemen. The colonials in Massachusetts can muster 30,000 militia in two days.

SMITH

Undisciplined farmers with no leadership. They'd be no match for well- led British regulars, no matter what the numbers. They'll scatter at the first shot.

GAGE

I'm not so sure, Colonel Smith. I saw these colonials fight in the French war, and they can be very determined. But they won't fight like we do, with precise movements and massed firepower. They'll fight Indian-style, behind rocks and trees.

SMITH

Then we shall root them out, tree by tree and rock by rock.

GAGE

We must do everything we can, gentlemen, to prevent things from coming to that.

EXT. A BOSTON STREET - DAY

Owen and Reggie marching with troops through Boston, led by a MOUNTED OFFICER. People glower at them. A group of teenage BOYS taunts them.

FIRST BOY

Hey, look at the lobsterbacks!

SECOND BOY

I'd like to catch YOU in a pot.

THIRD BOY

(walking beside Owen, taunting him)
 Bloodybacks, that's what I calls em.
 Hey, mister. Want to sell me that big gun? Ten pounds, tonight a Durfeys.
 Or you going to keep it to shoot me with? Go ahead you piece of . . .

MOUNTED OFFICER

Sergeant! Arrest that man!

The boys scatter, laughing. A piece of horse manure hits Owen on the back of the head as he marches on.

The soldiers march by a shop with a sign REVERE - SILVERSMITH. The proprietor stands at the door, glowering. A pretty girl of 19, PATIENCE HAMMOND, stands on a corner looking at the soldiers. Owen catches her eye, smiles and nods. She looks alarmed and hurries away. The troops pass the Old North Church, whose bell begins to toll.

INT. BARRACKS - DAY

Owen, Reggie and other soldiers are stowing their gear in their barracks. An old vet named HANSON leans on the door jamb, observing.

HANSON

Well, boys, welcome to Boston.

OWEN

Thanks. We didn't get much of a welcome marching through town.

HANSON

No, and you won't, neither. The people here have no love for us, that's for sure.

OWEN

One fellow said he wanted to buy my gun for ten pounds at some place called Durfey's. What's that all about?

HANSON

Oh, there's plenty of seducers about. They'll buy your gun for a month's pay. Or offer you 50 pounds and a hundred acre farm somewhere off in the wilderness if you desert. They've had to start flogging lads for supposedly losing their muskets. You'd best stay away from them snakes, if you know what's good for you.

REGGIE

How are the officers here?

HANSON

Oh, they're mostly a good lot, though they've had to crack down lately, cause of the desertions and lost muskets, and all. But General Gage, he's a fair man with good sense. Told us the other day that we was sitting on a powder keg here, and he didn't want no damned fool settin' it off.

OWEN

So what's the town like?

HANSON

Well, the people ain't too friendly, as you've already seen. But there's one or two taverns, like Durfey's, that are happy for our custom. Trouble is, there's not much else to do on your free time except get drunk, and most lads do. There's no women to speak of who would dare be seen with one of us, except one or two old whores who come around at night now and then.

REGGIE

You don't make it sound too cheery.

HANSON

Well, soldiering's not a bed of roses, friend. If you do your duty and stick by your mates, it's not too bad a place, here. I've been in lots worse. Calcutta, for example, which is like livin' in an oven and sick half the time. At least the people here are civilized and speak the King's English.

OWEN

There you are, Reggie. Look on the bright side.

EXT. - A COUNTRY ROAD - DAY

Colonel Leslie and Colonel Maddison riding at the head of a column of 100 redcoats marching through the countryside, passing workers harvesting crops in the fields, an occasional farmhouse and foot traveler, all who look glumly at the soldiers. Owen and Reggie are near the front. Colonel Leslie smiles and touches his hat to the people. The officers are attired in brilliant scarlet uniforms.

MADDISON

The country seems very prosperous,
Colonel Leslie.

LESLIE

Oh, it is, Colonel Maddison. Very prosperous. And these Yankees are hard workers when they're not in church or town meeting.

MADDISON

But they're clearly not happy to see us. I don't quite see the point of these excursions.

LESLIE

General Gage believes it's important to show ourselves often to the people. Not just to impress the more rebellious among them but also to accustom them to our movements, so as not to give undue alarm when we undertake some specific mission.

MADDISON

Such as?

LESLIE

Well, you've heard General Gage remark about New England being a powder keg. I believe it is his design to remove as much of that powder into our hands as possible.

MADDISON

Are there stores of powder lying about, then?

LESLIE

Yes, many. From the earliest days in this country, the colonial militias have kept arsenals of powder, muskets and cannon to be ready at hand in case of attack from Indians or the French. There are three or four around Boston. One in Medford, one in Salem, one in Portsmouth, and another, I believe, in Concord. This, of course, is to be kept in the strictest confidence.

Owen and Reggie, overhearing this conversation, look at each other.

EXT. A WHEAT FIELD - DAY

Two field WORKERS, leaning on their long scythes, watch the column departing in the distance.

FIRST WORKER

Look at them pretty scarlet uniforms the officers are wearin'. Wouldn't they make fine targets.

SECOND WORKER

Aye, they would. 'Specially in a forest. Very thoughtful of them.

INT. GAGE'S DINING ROOM - EVENING

Gage and LADY MARGARET GAGE are at the ends of the dining room table. The six guests are: LORD PERCY, COLONEL SMITH, MR and MRS WILLIAM BRATTLE, and MR and MRS JOSIAH COOK.

BRATTLE

General Gage, I wish to raise a glass to your gracious lady for providing such an excellent repast and such a pleasant evening.

The others raise their glasses to Lady Gage.

MARGARET

Thank you, Mr. Brattle. It is you, Mr. and Mrs. Brattle, and you, Mr. and Mrs. Cook, who do US the honor with your company. General Gage and I know very well that coming to our house does not make life easier for you with some of your neighbors.

COOK

Well, nothing a loyal Englishman does will please a few hotheads these days, Lady Gage. Let us hope that the present passions run their course and that cooler heads will soon prevail.

GAGE

I hope you're right, Mr. Cook. But some of your fellow townsmen seem to think the army's a gang of thieves and ruffians, come to repeal the Magna Carta.

MARGARET

Closing the port has been very hard on the town, Tom. You must admit that.

GAGE

Yes, I do. But that was not my doing. That came from London.

MARGARET

That doesn't make it any easier for them.

GAGE

Well, they must stop defying the laws of their country. When they do, I'm sure the port will be reopened.

BRATTLE

My sentiments exactly, General.

INT. - DURFEYS TAVERN - NIGHT

The tavern is crowded and noisy, mostly with British soldiers and sailors, some very drunk. Owen, carrying two tankards of beer, is making his way to a booth, where Reggie is sitting. As Owen puts the tankards on the table,

a man, SAMUEL DYER, is pushed against him, causing some beer to spill.

OWEN

Hey! Watch where you're going, mister!

DYER

I do beg your pardon, corporal. (grabs a passing barmaid) Here, Mattie. Two more pints for my friends here, compliments of Samuel Dyer.

OWEN

Why, thank you, mate.

DYER

Always happy to oblige men of the King's Own.

OWEN

Won't you join us, Mr. Dyer?

DYER

Why, that's mighty kind of you, corporal. Don't mind if I do.

REGGIE

Are you from around these parts, Mr. Dyer?

DYER

Yes sir. Boston born and bred. And what about you gentlemen, before you joined the army?

REGGIE

Owen here is from Bristol. I hail from Devonshire.

DYER

Ah, Bristol. I've called there a time or two. There was a pretty lass named Betsy. Worked at the Blue Pelican.

OWEN

Can't say as I know her. Are ye a sailor, then, Mr. Dyer?

DYER

Aye. At least I was, before they closed the port. Second mate on the Samantha Hall, a three master in the harbor there.

OWEN

Well, it's nice to met a friendly townsman at last. We've been here three weeks, and you're the first who hasn't acted like we were vermin.

DYER

Oh, well. You have to understand, it's nothing personal against you lads. Most of the people around here would be more than happy to welcome you boys into their homes and communities. This country needs all the fine young men it can get.

REGGIE

You could've fooled me.

DYER

It's true, all the same. It's just the uniform you're wearing that most people don't like. I'm not one of 'em, by the way. Wouldn't be here if I was. There's no man in Massachusetts that esteems and admires the thankless job you boys are doin' more than Sam Dyer, and that's the truth. You can ask anyone.

OWEN

I believe you, Mr. Dyer.

DYER

But there's more than one of your mates who's found out that this can be a very friendly place and a real land o' opportunity once he steps out of that uniform.

Dyer leans over and lowers his voice.

DYER (continued)

Why, you know, I heard a man just the other day who had more'n 2000 acres of good bottomland out near a place called Hadley, about 100 miles west of here. He was in town tryin' to find good men to go back and help him work his farm, but he couldn't find nary a soul -- not any worth a damn, anyway. And he was offering mighty generous terms, and land, too.

REGGIE

What terms?

DYER

Well, for the right men, he said he'd pay up to a hundred pounds a year per man, half in advance, plus food and lodging and a 100 acres of the man's own choosing after two years.

REGGIE

Why, that's two years pay in a year, not counting the land!

DYER

I know. It sounds unbelievable. But opportunities like that are not uncommon in these parts, for the right men. Land is plentiful, you see, and good men are scarce.

OWEN

So why didn't you take this man's offer, Mr. Dyer?

DYER

To tell you the truth, corporal, I would have, even though I am a sailor, not a farmer. Only thing is, I just got married, and my wife is expecting in January. I did tell the man I'd ask around, though - see if any of the boys here whose enlistments might be up soon would be interested. I believe he's partial to ex-soldiers.

OWEN

We've both got a few years left on ours.

DYER

(looking significantly at Owen)

I don't think he's all that particular.

OWEN

If you're suggesting desertion, Mr. Dyer, I for one value my neck, and the skin on my back.

DYER

I wouldn't suggest it for the world, corporal. But it is a big country out there, and there's more than a few of your mates who saw their chance and took it. I ain't heard of one yet that the provost marshal ever caught up with. Anyway, if you hear of any who might be interested, tell 'em to look me up. Durfey knows where to find me. I'll be saying goodnight, now, gentlemen. Maggie, two more for my friends, and put it on me bill.

EXT. - A BOSTON STREET - NIGHT

Owen and Reggie walking back to their barracks.

REGGIE

It's hard not to think about what that man said, Owen.

OWEN

Don't be a fool, Reggie. Even if your oath to the King meant nothing, would you want to live the rest of your life always looking over your shoulder? Always livin' in the shadow of the gallows?

REGGIE

I guess you're right. But he was a mighty persuasive fellow, and mighty neighborly, buying us those drinks.

OWEN

That's what worries me, Reggie. We could wind up feeling the cat on our own backs if that man gets caught and someone remembers us drinking his beer. Who knows what he might say about us to save his own skin.

EXT. PARADE GROUND - DAY

Owen's company, commanded by Sergeant Lamb, is practicing changing from one formation to another. They perform complex maneuvers quickly and with great skill, making the traditional, deep-throated "Huzzah! Huzzah! Huzzah!" as they change from one formation to another.

LAMB

At ease! Well, that wasn't too bad. Not too bad at all. That's all for today. Dismissed! Corporal Tolliver, a moment please.

OWEN

Yes, sergeant.

LAMB

Colonel Maddison would like a word with you.

Lamb leads Owen into a building.

INT. COLONEL MADDISON'S OFFICE

Colonel Maddison, reading papers at his desk. A knock is heard on the door.

MADDISON

Come in!

LAMB

Corporal Tolliver is here, sir.

Owen enters, stands at attention, salutes.

MADDISON

Corporal, it's come to my attention that you and your friend Private Harris were in conversation last night with a certain Samuel Dyer.

OWEN

Yes sir. Very friendly he was. Bought us each a couple of pints.

MADDISON

I'll be straight with you, Corporal, because I understand from Sergeant Lamb here that you are a reliable soldier with good sense. I have reason to believe that this Dyer may be someone who has been inducing some of our men to desert or sell their weapons. Did he say anything to you that would support that belief?

OWEN

Well, I couldn't say he came out straight and urged us to desert. In fact, he denied doing so. But he said he knew a man who was looking for strong men to hire at very handsome wages out west of here, and that if we knew of any, to put them in touch with him.

MADDISON

That's enough for me.

OWEN

But Colonel, I couldn't swear that he urged anyone to desert.

MADDISON

You won't have to swear to anything, Corporal. Thank You for your assistance. That is all.

Owen salutes and exits. Sergeant Lamb remains, as Maddison begins writing.

MADDISON (continued)

Hold on a moment, Sergeant. I'd like you to take this note to Admiral Graves, with my compliments.

EXT. - OUTSIDE DURFEY'S TAVERN - NIGHT

Samuel Dyer comes out of Durfey's tavern and heads home. At the corner, a naval OFFICER with two marines steps out of the shadows.

OFFICER

Samuel Dyer?

DYER

Who wants to know?

OFFICER

By order of Admiral Graves, you are hereby impressed into the service of his Majesty's navy.

DYER

The Devil you say! You can't do that!

OFFICER

I most certainly can. I suggest you come quietly if you don't want to be shot for desertion.

DYER

But, but . . . I have to go home. Tell my wife. Get my things.

OFFICER

No, you must come with us now. You may write your wife. His Majesty's Navy has everything you will need.

Dyer starts to cry out and pull away, but a marine stuns him with a blow to the head with a musket butt, and they lead him off, staggering.

EXT. - A DESERTED SECTION OF BACK BAY AT DUSK

SUPER TITLE:

Back Bay, Boston - September 1774.

A salt marsh at low tide. The sun is low in the sky. Patches of tall spartina grass intersperse with short sections of beach. The tide is just beginning to flow in; the mudflats stretch far out.

Owen is walking along the shore, hat under his arm. He hears a girl's cries for help. He looks around and sees a dim figure out on the mudflats, 100 yards away. He throws down his hat, runs out, and finds Patience Hammond, the girl he'd seen on the street corner, holding a clamming stick, her feet stuck in the mud and very frightened about the rising tide, already up to her knees. A wicker basket half full of clams and mussels is next to her.

Owen, standing on a firmer patch of ground, holds her hands and manages to pull her out. She clasps him, sobbing with fright and relief, then recovers herself and shyly pulls away. She grabs her basket, but he takes it from her and they hurry back to the shore.

Finally on the dry beach, Patience takes one handle of the basket and they carry it together between them. After walking five seconds in silence, Patience speaks.

PATIENCE

Thank you, sir, for saving my life.

OWEN

Glad to be of service, miss. But I'm sure someone would have come by soon if I hadn't.

PATIENCE

I don't know. I'd been calling for half an hour, and the tide is coming in quick now. To get STUCK like that! It's never happened before.

OWEN

It happened to a man I knew back in Bristol once. They found him the next day, drowned, when the tide went out.

Patience shudders.

OWEN (continued)

You shouldn't go out by yourself, miss.

PATIENCE

I usually go with my sister, MAGGIE. But she went with my mother today to visit my aunt and uncle in Cambridge.

OWEN

I've seen you several times in town, miss. The first time was my very first day in this country, when we were marching off the ship. I remember you very well.

PATIENCE

(softly, looking down)

I remember you, too.

OWEN

There were a bunch of boys, too, calling us names, they were.

PATIENCE

My brother NED was probably one of them.

OWEN

(hesitates)

Why do they hate us so? I can't understand it

PATIENCE

(with a look and tone of disbelief)

Oh, you can't understand it?

OWEN

No, I can't. We're here for your protection, after all.

PATIENCE

Our protection! That's a laugh! We've been in Boston 150 years now, and doing very well, thank you, without any soldiers among us. Then suddenly, seven years ago, our good king thinks we need protection? And that's why he sent 3000 soldiers to Boston? To protect us?

OWEN

Well then, why do you think we're here?

PATIENCE

Why, to take away our liberties, of course! Why else?

OWEN

Well, no one's told me to take anyone's liberties away. In fact, General Gage has given us strict orders not to give the slightest offense to the people of this country - to hold our tongues even when you call us names, and when you throw garbage and dung at us in the streets!

PATIENCE

Do you wonder that we call you names when you've closed our port, and banned our town meetings, and send swarms of court lackeys to be our judges and tax collectors. My father's a ship chandler. He's had to close his shop. My uncle was a magistrate in Cambridge until some fat Londoner was sent to take his place!

OWEN

(after a pause)]

Well, I'm sorry for that, miss. I won't argue with you. All I know is that no one I know wants to take anyone's liberties. I used to be proud I was a British regular. In England, when we'd walk down the street, people would smile and show respect.

They walk on a few steps.

OWEN (continued)

When I came here three months ago, I thought it would be the same. I was excited. I wanted to meet new friends, impress the girls, protect my fellow countrymen from the savages.

Owen stops and looks out over the water.

OWEN (continued)

I had no NOTION of what it would be like. Nothing but abuse from the people, no chance of making friends among them, and hardly enough pay from the army to live on. A soldier in my company was flogged half to death today for selling his musket to one of your bloke's for two months pay. Tried to say it'd been stolen, but the bloke who bought it informed on him.

Patience looks at him sympathetically.

O.S. a man's voice calls Patience. Patience, where are you?

PATIENCE

It's my father! He mustn't see me with you. Please stay here.

OWEN

As you wish, miss.

Patience runs off in the direction of the voice, lugging the basket. O.S. voices fading in the distance.

Owen is left alone in the dark. Takes a deep breath, sighs, walks on.

INT. OWEN'S BARRACKS - NIGHT

Owen and Reggie, alone in their barracks room, are sitting on adjacent beds talking.

REGGIE

Come on, Owen. This is better than a fairy story. You rescue the fair damsel in distress and then she runs off into the night.

OWEN

Sad but true. Now listen, Reggie. You'd better not breathe a word of this to anyone.

REGGIE

Sure, Owen. Mum's the word. But you have to promise to introduce me to her sister.

OWEN

I don't think she or her sister wants to have anything to do with British soldiers. Unfortunately.

INT. GENERAL GAGE'S HOUSE - NIGHT

A soiree at General Gage's house. Gage and his wife Margaret are greeting guests in the front hall.

GAGE

So good of you to come, Mr. Brattle. You know Lady Gage, of course.

BRATTLE

Of course, Lady Gage. Charmed, as always. I am sorry to say that Mrs. Brattle has a slight indisposition and was unable to come. She wishes me to say how very disappointed she is.

MARGARET

I'm so sorry to hear it. Please convey our respects and our hopes for a speedy recovery.

GAGE

You will find politics in the drawing room, cards in the parlor and billiards in the library. Whatever suits your fancy.

Brattle moves on while Gage and Margaret greet another guest.

INT. GAGES' PARLOR - NIGHT

Two tables playing cards. Two or three other people are chatting. The first table has four PLAYERS, all men. PLAYER ONE is a fat, leering fellow close to the door with his back to it.

PLAYER ONE

(softly to the table)

I hear General Gage has become quite an American. They say he has 18,000 acres in New York. And I understand his wife is from New Jersey.

PLAYER TWO

She is. And an heiress, to boot. Though some say she is a bit too sympathetic to the rabble rousers in which this country abounds.

PLAYER ONE

His mother was quite a beauty, too.

PLAYER THREE

Really?

PLAYER ONE

Oh yes. And with quite a reputation in London society.

PLAYER TWO

Do tell. I hadn't heard.

PLAYER ONE

(lowers his voice)

Oh yes. Why there was even an expression current in society some years ago for something very unlikely to happen. People would say it would happen (raises his voice in laughter)-- when Lady Gage turns chaste!

At that moment, Gage, with Margaret just behind him, comes into the doorway. Hearing the remark, he starts, flushes and turns away to another room. Margaret glares furiously at the back of the offender, then sympathetically at Gage as she follows him.

EXT. PARADE GROUND - DAY

Gage and Colonel Maddison, on the porch of a barracks, watch troop drilling.

GAGE

Colonel Maddison, I've received information from our good friend Mr. Brattle of Cambridge that Mr. Hancock and his friends are planning to remove gunpowder and muskets from the Powder House near Medford before the week is out. Look at this letter.

Maddison scans the letter and hands it back.

MADDISON

Is he reliable?

GAGE

Yes, I believe he is. And with your help, I plan to steal a march on our American friends. I want you to take your best company and depart after dark tonight by boats that will take you up the Mystic River to a point near Medford, where you should arrive well before dawn.

MADDISON

We'll be ready, General. I'll need to see the route on a map.

GAGE

Of course. I want you and your captains to be in my office in one hour, where we'll go over the plan in detail with Admiral Graves and his people.

A passing sergeant salutes. Gage returns his salute.

GAGE (continued)

I've selected you for your good sense and discretion, Colonel Maddison. It is most essential that word of this not get out before we move. The Americans have a regular network of couriers and spies, directed by a silversmith, a man named Revere. I can't even be sure of my household servants. Revere, Hancock, Dr. Joseph Warren and a few other agitators meet regularly at a place in town called the Green Dragon Tavern to plot against us.

MADDISON
You seem well informed, General.

GAGE
(with a dubious expression)
I try to be.

EXT. POWDER HOUSE, MEDFORD - DAWN

SUPER TITLE:

September 5, 1774, Medford, Massachusetts.

Colonel Maddison leads a company of 80 soldiers and three horse-drawn wagons in the early dawn light up to the Powder House, a windowless conical tower. Owen and Reggie are near the head of the column. A single SENTRY guards the door.

SENTRY
Halt! Who goes there.

MADDISON
I'm Colonel Maddison of the King's Own Regiment of Foot. I am here on orders from General Gage to remove the powder and arms stored here to a more secure place. Here is the order.

SENTRY
You can't do that! This powder belongs to the militia, not the British Army! It's always been militia powder. HEL . . .

The sentry starts to yell for help but chokes off his cry when Maddison sticks a pistol under his chin.

MADDISON
Captain Balfour, get these stores loaded in the wagons as quickly as you can so we can get back to the boats before the bees start to swarm.

The soldiers hurry into the arsenal.

EXT. MYSTIC RIVER - MORNING

Maddison and his company are in boats pulling into the Mystic River. A few locals are watching.

MADDISON

Very well done, gentleman. Very well done, indeed. In and out before they knew it.

EXT. - THE GREEN DRAGON TAVERN - BOSTON -EVENING

DR. BENJAMIN CHURCH opens the door under the tavern sign, a green dragon, and enters.

INT. MAIN FLOOR OF THE TAVERN - EVENING

Dr. Church enters the main room of the tavern. The LANDLORD, behind the bar, is the only person present.

LANDLORD

Good evening, Dr. Church.

CHURCH

Good evening, Henry. Is Dr. Warren in?

LANDLORD

Yes. He's upstairs with Mr. Revere, Mr. Hancock, Mr. Adams and a gentleman from Virginia. A Mr. Lee, I believe. They're expecting you.

CHURCH

Thank you.

INT. AN UPSTAIRS ROOM - EVENING

Church enters an upstairs room. Seated around a table are Paul Revere, DR. JOSEPH WARREN, SAM ADAMS, JOHN HANCOCK and RICHARD LEE.

WARREN

Ah, Benjamin, I'm glad you're here. We have a distinguished visitor, Mr. Richard Lee, from the Virginia Committee of Correspondence. Mr. Lee, I'm pleased to present our colleague, Dr. Benjamin Church.

LEE

Very pleased to meet you, Dr. Church.

CHURCH

I'm honored, Mr. Lee. We're very pleased to have you here.

WARREN

Benjamin, we've been discussing whether these Intolerable Acts of the Government are merely isolated outrages by the current ministry, or whether, instead, they're part of a systematic plan by the King himself to subjugate the colonies completely.

ADAMS

Hancock here takes the more charitable view. He thinks they're merely the blunders of LORD NORTH and his clique, which we can expect future ministries will rectify.

CHURCH

I'm inclined to agree with him. Already our friends in Parliament, Mr. Fox, Mr. Burke and others, are speaking out against these follies.

ADAMS

Well, I, for one, think we'd be fools to pin our hopes on a change in ministries. To me, it's as plain as day that all of these acts are part of a wicked and deliberate plot to abolish our rights and make us no better than slaves. The impressment of this man Dyer the other day is just the latest outrage in a long string of outrages starting with the Stamp Act.

WARREN

I agree with Sam. There are too many things to be unconnected to any plan. And our friends in other colonies think the same.

O.S. A knock on the door.

WARREN

Come in.

LANDLORD

Pardon me, Dr. Warren, there's a messenger here who wishes to speak with Mr. Revere most urgently.

Revere gets up to leave.

WARREN

No, you stay, Paul. Send him up, landlord. Let's all hear his news.

Messenger, AB, enters.

REVERE

What is it, Ab.

AB

The redcoats, Mr. Revere. They marched on the Powder House at Medford this morning. Killed six people and took all the powder and guns.

REVERE

Killed six people!? Did you see this?

AB

No. I was over to Cambridge. But a boy rode in and told everybody all about it.

REVERE

How many regulars were there?

AB

The boy said hundreds.

REVERE

And where are the redcoats now?

AB

I don't know. I rode here as soon as I heard the news.

WARREN

Well, Paul. You'd better get your people on the road. Have 'em tell the militias to march to Boston without delay.

Revere leaves the room.

INT. AN INN - NIGHT

A dozen men are socializing in the common room of an inn when a RIDER clatters up and bangs on the door. The LANDLORD opens it, the rider enters

RIDER

The war has begun! British troops are on the march. The fleet is bombarding Boston. Assemble your militia and send them to Boston. There's not a moment to be lost.

As the rider leaves, all the men start talking excitedly. The landlord speaks to a boy.

LANDLORD

Jamie, run to the pastor's and then get three or four lads to help you spread the word around town. All militia to meet here, prepared to march in one hour.

EXT. A COUNTRY ROAD - DAY

200 men marching on a country road.

EXT. A COUNTRY ROAD - DAY

100 men marching on a different road.

EXT. A COUNTRY ROAD - DAY

150 men marching on a different road. A RIDER comes from the direction in which they are marching and stops at the head of the column. He hands the CAPTAIN, the officer in charge a piece of paper.

RIDER

The alarm has passed, Captain.
Your men can go home.

CAPTAIN

What happened?

RIDER

Well, the redcoats seized the powder
and guns at Medford, but they got back
to their barracks before the country
was aroused.

CAPTAIN

The bastards! But what about the
killings? The bombardment of Boston?

RIDER

False alarms, apparently. There was no
bloodshed, not this time, anyway. But
they'll try again, you can be sure of
that.

CAPTAIN

I expect they will.

INT. - MAIN ROOM OF THE GREEN DRAGON TAVERN - DAY

Hancock, Warren, Adams and Church are seated around a
table. Paul Revere comes in.

REVERE

Well, gentlemen, my riders tell me we had
between 20,000 and 30,000 minutemen on the
road to Boston within 24 hours of our
sending out the alarm.

WARREN

That's impressive, Paul. But we must be
more certain of our information next time.
We can't keep counting on that kind of
support if we cry wolf too many times.

HANCOCK

I heartily agree with that, Joseph. But
tell them about the letter.

WARREN

(lowers his voice and looks around)
Well, gentlemen, I've come into possession of this letter here dated last week from William Brattle to General Gage informing him of our plans to remove the stores from the Powder House at Medford.

ADAMS

Why, that no good, treacherous bastard!

WARREN

John here and I think we ought to arrange to have it published.

CHURCH

If you do, he's liable to be lynched, Sam.

ADAMS

It's no less than he deserves.

CHURCH

But how do we know this letter is authentic? Where did you get it, Joseph?

WARREN

I don't think I need to go into that. But I'm quite sure the letter is authentic. It is definitely in Brattle's hand. I compared it with some correspondence he sent me last year, and it matched.

ADAMS

I say go ahead and have it published.

REVERE

And I.

Church is silent.

EXT. GAGE'S HOUSE - NIGHT

Owen and Reggie are on sentry duty flanking the front gate of Gage's house. A wall surrounds the house. There are two large swinging gates. Dr. Benjamin Church comes up to Owen.

CHURCH

I have an appointment to see General Gage.

OWEN

Yes sir.

Owen opens the gate, lets Church through.

OWEN (continued)

(in a low voice)

I've seen that man, Reggie. He's one of the leaders of those Sons of Liberty. Dr. Church, I think his name is. They told me to let him in but not to ask his name.

Reggie gives Owen a knowing look.

EXT. GAGE'S HOUSE - NIGHT

Gage is standing by the open front door with Church. Gage gives Church an envelope.

CHURCH

Good night, General Gage.

GAGE

Good night, doctor. And thank you.

INT. GAGE'S LIBRARY - NIGHT

Margaret is reading a book. Gage comes in.

MARGARET

Who was that, dear?

GAGE

Oh, just some business.

Gage sits in a chair and muses gloomily.

MARGARET

Has anything happened? You look troubled.

GAGE

Well, last week I received a communication from our friend, Mr. Brattle, that Dr. Warren and his friends were planning to remove a considerable supply of powder and arms from the powder house at Medford. So, two days ago, I sent a company to Medford with Colonel Maddison, and they very neatly removed the entire supply back here to Boston before anyone was hardly awake.

MARGARET

But doesn't that belong to the local militia?

GAGE

These are English subjects, my dear, and their militias are subject to my command. Anyway, within 24 hours of our action, this man Revere and his network of riders had stirred up the whole country, and there were at least 20,000 armed men on the march here to Boston. Fortunately, they were called off today, or we'd be in a very serious way right now.

MARGARET

Oh, my heavens!

GAGE

My heavens, indeed. I have written this day to Lord North telling him I need 20,000 more troops if his Majesty wishes to keep his American colonies. The ship carrying that letter just left with the tide.

MARGARET

But Tom, you can't keep these colonies loyal to the crown by force.

GAGE

Maybe not. But it's the only way I know to keep them obedient to the laws of Great Britain, which is the only job I'm paid to do. But speaking of loyalty, my dear, I have learned that the letter I received from Brattle has somehow come into the possession of Mr. Hancock, who intends to publish it. So it appears that there is a spy in my own house!

MARGARET

(rising out of her chair)

Are you accusing me?

GAGE

I didn't say that.

MARGARET

Well, it certainly sounded like it. And speaking of spies, who is your spy, General Gage?

EXT. GAGE'S HOUSE - NIGHT

Owen and Reggie hear the raised voices of Gage and Margaret and look at each other with raised eyebrows.

INT. - A ROOM IN ST. JAMES PALACE - DAY

GEORGE III, a handsome man of 36, and his ministers, LORD NORTH (the Prime Minister), the EARL OF DARTMOUTH and four others are seated around a table. George III holds a letter in his hand.

GEORGE III.

Has General Gage gone completely MAD? He wants twenty THOUSAND more troops! Doesn't he realize that there are only 12,000 regular soldiers in all of Britain? Where on Earth does he think we could find TWENTY THOUSAND troops?

NORTH

We'd have to go on a complete war footing.

GEORGE III.

I think perhaps General Gage has lost his nerve. Do you think we should put another man in there?

NORTH

He's been very sound up to now, Your Majesty. My sources also report that he's very well thought of by his men. I think we should stay with him a bit longer.

GEORGE III.

Very well. But we must make it very clear to him how absurd is this request. How many can we spare him?

DARTMOUTH.

We can send him six or seven hundred more marines, three regiments of foot and DeLancey's dragoons, about 2000 in all, your majesty.

GEORGE III

Well, let it be done. Gentlemen, I am completely mystified by these Americans. Here we spend enormous sums for their defense and administration, and yet they react violently to any effort to have them contribute to the costs. And when we bend over backwards to conciliate them, it only makes them more fractious. Here we lifted every tax to which they object except a trifling tax on tea, and what do they do? They dump a shipful of the stuff in the harbor.

NORTH

I think it's a handful of agitators that are stirring them up, Your Majesty. Warren, Hancock, Adams and a few others. They should lose their following when the people of Massachusetts begin to feel the pinch of our recent measures.

GEORGE III

I hope so. I have no wish to make war on my own subjects.

DARTMOUTH

As long as we remain firm with
Massachusetts, the other colonies will
see the folly of Boston's rebelliousness.

GEORGE III

As long as we're careful not to touch
off a powder keg. Here I agree with
General Gage that his first order of
business must be to disarm the
Bostonians and remove stores of powder
and guns from the arsenals in
Massachusetts. Please stress our
approval of that policy in your reply
to him, Lord North.

NORTH

Yes, your majesty.

EXT. BACKBAY - AFTERNOON

Owen is walking along the beach. The sky threatens rain.
Three or four figures are clamming out on the mud flats,
widely spaced.

Owen recognizes Patience, 50 yards from the beach, and
stops to watch her. Thunder rumbles. Patience looks up,
picks up her basket and starts to angle in toward the
beach. The other clambers also head in down the beach.
Patience notices Owen, stops, then continues. Owen walks
along the beach, intercepting her.

PATIENCE

What are you doing here?

OWEN

Oh, I've been here several times.
Hoping to see you.

PATIENCE

Are you mad? A British redcoat
walking about alone in a place like this.
If you come across some Liberty Boys like
my brother, you're likely to wind up with
a serious accident.

OWEN

It's well worth the risk. Where's your sister?

PATIENCE

She's sick today.

OWEN

Nothing serious I hope.

PATIENCE

She had a bad fever, but it broke last night. She seems better today.

OWEN

I'm glad to hear it. Can I help you with your basket.

PATIENCE

No! Now, listen . . . I don't even know your name.

OWEN

(bowing)

Corporal Owen Tolliver, Miss, of His Majesty's Fourth Foot, at your service.

PATIENCE

Well listen, Corporal Tolliver, I'm very grateful for your helping me that other time, but I can't be friends with you. Why, even to be seen with you . . .

OWEN

Well, I'm truly sorry to hear that, miss. I've thought about you often these past few months.

PATIENCE

(looking down)

I too. But . . . I'm sorry. It just can't be.

OWEN

And is this the liberty you Americans are so fond of preaching about, which doesn't even include the liberty of choosing your own friends?

Thunder rumbles again, and drops of rain begin to fall. They walk faster as it rains harder. They see a low three-sided shed covering several rowboats set back from the beach. They run to it and get under it just as the downpour starts.

Sitting side by side looking out at the rain, Patience, wet from the rain, begins to shiver. Owen takes off his red woolen jacket and puts it around her shoulders.

PATIENCE

Oh, no. I couldn't.

OWEN

Don't worry miss. No one can see you wearing a red coat in here.

PATIENCE

Well . . ., thank you. But aren't you cold?

OWEN

No, I'm fine. What are you doing out here alone? Didn't you learn how dangerous that can be the last time?

PATIENCE

Yes, I know. But we have to live somehow. My FATHER and my brother Silas hired out to a Marblehead fishing schooner last month and are out on the Banks, and my brother NED is lobstering, and I have to do my part.

OWEN

(Looking in her basket)

So, it looks like you just started.

PATIENCE

No. I've been out a couple of hours now. There aren't as many this time of year. But I get a little more for them from the fishmonger.

Owen looks at her thoughtfully.

OWEN

So, now you know my name, miss, but I don't know yours.

PATIENCE

Patience. Patience Hammond.

OWEN

Patience. I thought that's what I heard your father call you that other time. Well, Miss Patience Hammond, I won't bother you any more if you don't want me too. I can't expect you to go against all your family and friends for someone you don't even know.

PATIENCE

You don't know me, either. You know nothing about me.

OWEN

Well, I know you're very pretty. And I know you are a girl of spirit who speaks her own mind, straight out. . . . And I know I can't get you out of my mind.

Patience looks into Owens eyes and sighs. O.S., a voice calls her name.

PATIENCE

Oh my God! It's my brother Ned!

As Patience starts to leave, Owen grabs her hand. She turns back and looks at him. Their faces draw together, they kiss, she pulls away sharply, throws off his jacket and runs out into the rain.

GENERAL GAGE'S OFFICE - DAY

Gage is writing at his desk, hears a knock on the door.

GAGE

Come in.

COLONEL LESLIE

We've captured Harkins, sir.

GAGE

(sighs heavily)

I almost wish you hadn't, Colonel.
Deserting for the third time doesn't
give me much choice, does it?

LESLIE

I'm afraid not, sir.

GAGE

And the poor fool's only what?
Twenty? But if I don't do it this time,
we may not have a thousand men left in
two months time.

LESLIE

I agree, General.

Gage stands up and looks out the window grimly.

GAGE

So we'll have to make an example of
Harkins, both to our men and to the
townspeople. I want the court martial
tomorrow, and, if he's found guilty, I
want the sentence carried out Friday on
Boston Common in front of the entire
command.

LESLIE

On Boston Common? Are you sure that's
wise, General? Won't that stir the
people up even more against us?

GAGE

They're the ones responsible for it, Colonel, not I. It's THEM and their incessant seductions that cause these boys to run off. They MUST be made to see the consequences of their own actions.

LESLIE

Very well, General.

EXT. BOSTON COMMON - DAY

The British troops are lined up to watch the execution of Private Harkins. It's a gray January day; snow is on the ground. Harkins is tied to a pole facing a firing squad. An officer ties a bandana over his eyes.

A large crowd of hostile townspeople is held back by a line of soldiers holding bayonets. Owen and Reggie are in this line. Shouts of "Butchers!" and "Murderers!" come from the crowd. Owen sees Patience near the front of the crowd opposite him.

The drum roll begins. The crowd falls silent. An officer drops his sword, a volley of shots, Harkins slumps. The crowd groans, presses forward. The troops push them back.

Patience is pressed up against Owen and pushes a note into his pocket. A squad behind Owen fires a volley of shots into the air. The crowd stops and withdraws, slowly and sullenly.

INT. OWEN'S BARRACKS - DAY

Owen and Reggie are sitting on their bunks. A dozen other SOLDIERS, including Hanson, the old vet, are sitting and standing about, quiet and glum.

FIRST SOLDIER

They shouldna done it. He just couldn't take it anymore. There was no cause to shoot him.

SECOND SOLDIER

It's Gage, boys. He'll have us all shot or flogged to death before he's done.

HANSON

(angrily)

That's fool's talk, mister. And Harkins was a fool too, and got no more 'n he deserved.

SECOND SOLDIER

What? To be shot?

HANSON

You're damned right! He shoulda been shot the first time, but General Gage was too kindhearted, and let him get away with it, not once but twice. If he'd let him off a third time, he wouldna had an army left by summer.

Hanson paces back and forth.

HANSON (continued)

Now listen, boys. Nobody said bein' a soldier of the king was going to be peaches and cream when you signed up. But we all took an oath to stick by the old man through thick and thin. And we all got to stick together, too, and stand by General Gage! Cause I got a feeling things are gonna get hot around here, and if we don't, we're all lost, for sure.

OWEN

He's right, Reggie.

Reggie nods grimly and turns away. Owen pulls the note out of his pocket and looks at it surreptitiously. Camera zooms on the note, which reads: Behind the Old North Church - 9 tonight.

EXT. OLD NORTH CHURCH - NIGHT

Owen is walking alone on a Boston street. He stops by a dim oil-lit street lamp in front of the Old North Church and looks up at the steeple and sees the full moon behind it. Owen goes through a side gate and around to the back of the church. White grave stones loom out of the darkness.

As he walks by a tall wood shed abutting the back of the church, Patience grabs his hand, pulls him into the shed and closes the door. A chink in the wall admits faint moonlight. Owen and Patience stand facing each other a moment, then embrace and kiss hungrily.

PATIENCE

I'm mad to do this. Mad.

OWEN

Such sweet madness, then.

PATIENCE

(stroking his face)

Oh Owen. How can we ever manage it?

OWEN

Well, I hope to become a sergeant in a year or two. Two can live on a sergeant's pay.

PATIENCE

My father would never consent to it. Not as long as you're wearing that uniform.

OWEN

Well, my enlistment's up in three years. We could wed then, if you could wait that long. I won't desert, if that's what you're thinking.

PATIENCE

(shudders)

No! Never! Not after what happened today.

Owen takes her face in his hands and kisses her, then sighs.

OWEN

Three years is a long time to wait, but I can do it if you can.

PATIENCE

But my father may not give his consent even then. And your regiment may be sent somewhere else before then.

OWEN

Well, all I know is this. I love you, Patience Hammond, and I want you to be my wife. And short of breaking my oath to the king, I'll do anything to make that happen.

PATIENCE

I love you too, Owen Tolliver, and I want you to be my husband. I just wish I could see a way that that could happen.

They kiss again.

PATIENCE (continued)

I have to go now, Owen. Can you come here next Tuesday, same time? I do housework for Mrs. Warren every Tuesday, and this is on my way home.

OWEN

I should be able to, but a soldier's time is not his own.

PATIENCE

I'll understand. Goodbye, Owen.

OWEN

Goodbye, Patience.

A lingering kiss. Patience leaves.

INT. GENERAL GAGE'S OFFICE - DAY

February 26, 1775. General Gage, Admiral Graves, naval CAPTAIN MACARTNEY, Colonel Leslie, Colonel Maddison and Captain Balfour are standing around a table with a map of Boston and vicinity on it. Lord Percy enters.

GAGE

Ah, Lord Percy. Now we are complete. Gentlemen, I've asked you here because I have received information that the colonials are converting a large number of old ships cannon into field pieces at the forge at Salem. I mean to seize those cannon and to remove them to Castle Island. My plan is this: The mission will be carried out by the 64th Foot under the command of Colonel Leslie.

The camera focuses on the map and Gage points out the route.

GAGE (continued)

The 64th will proceed directly from their quarters on Castle Island by sea to Marblehead Neck, here. That way Revere and his spies should not get wind of our movements. The men will board HMS Mercury, commanded by Captain Macartney here, tonight at 11 o'clock, and they should arrive at Marblehead about 6 tomorrow morning.

LESLIE

Tonight, General?

GAGE

Yes, Colonel Leslie, tonight. Tomorrow is Sunday, so the local people will be in church when you are on the march. You will proceed by this road about five miles to Salem, here, and to the forge, here.

The camera pans to the map, where Gage is pointing to Salem and the forge across the river to the north of the town.

GAGE (continued)

You will seize all the cannon and other munitions that you find and return with them to the ship. You are authorized to commandeer all the wagons and draft animals you may need, providing receipts for them, of course. Any questions, gentlemen?

LESLIE

No, sir.

GAGE

Good. Colonel Leslie, you'd best return to Castle Island at once to prepare your men. Oh, and I want you to take Captain Balfour, here, and his company from the 4th Foot with you. That should occasion no suspicion and should give you about 250 men for your mission.

LESLIE

Very good, sir.

GAGE

Now, as at Medford, gentlemen, the key to success will be secrecy and surprise.

INT. A CHURCH IN MARBLEHEAD - DAY

The congregation is singing OH GOD OUR HELP IN AGES PAST. REVEREND TITSWORTH stands at the front of the church.

The door opens and a young man, snatching off his cap, hurries up the aisle to MAJOR PEDRICK'S pew, and whispers urgently in his ear. Major Pedrick nods, waits until the hymn is finished, then strides to the front of the church.

PEDRICK

Pardon me, Reverend Titsworth. I have just received the most urgent news. There's not a moment to be lost.

TITSWORTH

What is it, Major Pedrick? Let's Hear your news.

PEDRICK

Friends, a regiment of redcoats just landed at Homan's Cove and is on the road to Salem at this very moment! It's plain they intend to seize or destroy the militia's cannon there. I will ride to Salem now to warn them. Sam (pointing a man in the congregation), you must muster the Marblehead militia and bring them to Salem as fast as you possibly can.

SAM

I will, Josiah. But how can you get to Salem when the British are on the road?

PEDRICK

I don't know. Whatever way I can. Tom, try to get word to Peabody and the other towns to send everybody they can to Salem. But listen. Everyone. Remember Sam Adams' wise counsel. If there is to be any bloodshed, God forbid, it is vitally important that THEY, not US, be the ones to fire the first shot.

Pedrick runs out.

EXT. ON THE SALEM ROAD - DAY

Pedrick is galloping his horse on the road through fields and woods. Church bells behind him are pealing. In a wooded stretch, he rounds a bend and sees the rear of the British column 100 yards in front of him. He quickly brings his horse to a slow trot. He approaches the rear of the column trying hard to appear nonchalant. As he nears it, he sees Colonel Leslie standing by the side of the road urging the men on.

LESLIE

Close it up there, men. Step lively now.

PEDRICK

Why Colonel Leslie! What a pleasure to see you again.

LESLIE

Hello, Major Pedrick. [Suspiciously]
What brings you out on this cold Sunday
morning?

PEDRICK

Well, I might ask the same of you, but
it's none of my business. I'm on my
way to Gloucester, as it happens.
I've had word that my mother there is
very ill. I was supposed to be there
yesterday, but my horse came up lame,
so I had to spend the night in Lynn and
get another horse there this morning.
I'm praying that I'm not too late.

LESLIE

I'm afraid I cannot let you pass, Major.

PEDRICK

But Colonel, I've been riding hard for
two days. You would not keep a man
from his dying mother. And what right
have you to block the King's highway,
anyway?

LESLIE

(after reflecting a moment)

Will you give me your word as a
gentleman that you will proceed directly
to Gloucester and have no business in
any other place?

PEDRICK

Of course.

LESLIE

Give Major Pedrick the road, boys.

PEDRICK

God bless you, Colonel Leslie.

Pedrick trots slowly by the column. When he is out of
sight, he breaks into a gallop.

EXT. SALEM TOWN SQUARE - DAY

People are rushing about carrying muskets, barrels and boxes and loading them into wagons. One man gives directions to another, who leaps on a horse and gallops away.

EXT. SALEM IRON FORGE - DAY

From a high angle, the camera shows a drawbridge over the North River, on the north side of Salem, and, 100 yards beyond it, the iron forge, a large building with smoke issuing from the chimney. The camera zooms in on the forge, where men are bustling about, removing cannon with horses and oxen.

EXT. SALEM TOWN SQUARE - DAY

The British column marches into the town square and halts. A large crowd of hostile townspeople are gathered.

LESLIE

Captain Balfour. Take your men and conduct a quick search of the buildings and houses around the square. No more than 15 minutes.

As Balfour and his men fan out, a townsman approaches Leslie and whispers in his ear for a few minutes. The other townspeople glare at him and mutter to each other. Balfour returns with his men.

BALFOUR

Nothing, Colonel.

LESLIE

All right then, get back in the column.

Balfour's men form up at the rear of the column.

LESLIE

Regiment! Forward, quick march!

The way is blocked by a crowd of sullen townspeople.

LESLIE

You people! Make way there!

The crowd does not move. Leslie calls to Captain BROWN.

LESLIE (continued)
Captain Brown.

BROWN
First platoon! By the flank!

20 soldiers at the front of the column spread out in two rows facing the crowd.

BROWN (continued)
Present!

The front row kneels, and the soldiers raise their muskets.

The crowd grudgingly divides and moves to both sides of the road. The column trots through them.

EXT. THE STREETS OF SALEM - DAY

As the column trots through the town, the crowd follows, shouting insults.

MAN
Lobsterbacks!

OLD WOMAN
Sabbath breakers!

YOUNG WOMAN
Go home!

EXT. - THE NORTH RIVER BRIDGE - DAY

When the column gets to the North River drawbridge, it is in a raised position. A large number of Salem militia have gathered, rifles in hand. Leslie goes to the bridge and shouts to the men on the other side.

LESLIE
You men! Lower this bridge at once!

MAN No. 1
I'm damned if we will!

LESLIE

How dare you obstruct the King's highway! You lower this bridge at once or my men will open fire.

Militia Captain JOHN FELT steps forward and addresses Leslie.

FELT

You'll be damned if you do. You have no right to fire without further orders.

LESLIE

I have every right to fire on those who would obstruct the King's troops. And fire I shall!

FELT

If you do, you're all dead men. You've got the Salem militia here in front of you, and look now behind you. The Marblehead militia have arrived. And more are coming every minute. I'd think a long time before starting a fight here, Colonel.

Owen, at the rear of the column, turns to see the rough, grim faces of the Marblehead fisherman, including several blacks, holding muskets, cutlasses and harpoons. One man, brandishing a harpoon, leers at Owen, revealing a missing tooth.

LESLIE

(stamping his feet in vexation)

God DAMN you people! God DAMN it!

Leslie starts pacing back and forth. Several men sit on the edge of the raised draw bridge opposite, dangling their feet over the edge, and shout: Red jackets! Cowards! Damnation to your government!

Leslie notices three large scows in the river near the bridge.

LESLIE

Captain Brown! Seize those boats!

BROWN

First platoon! Secure those boats!

As the soldiers move toward the scows, a half dozen Salem men run to them first and begin smashing in the bottoms. As the soldiers arrive at the boats, Brown yells to the Salem men.

BROWN (continued)

You men, stop that this instant, or my men will fire.

One of the men, JOSEPH WHICHER, in the boat nearest the soldiers, rises up and tears open his shirt, exposing his chest.

WHICHER

Go ahead, you bloody cowards! Go ahead and shoot, if you dare!

The soldier nearest him, infuriated, steps forward and jabs at Whicher with his bayonet, pricking his chest and drawing a small amount of blood.

WHICHER (continued)

Ahhh, you bloody bastard.

The crowd begins to mutter angrily and push against the soldiers on the road, who push back with their bayonets. Leslie looks across the river and sees more militia arriving at the north end of the bridge. A minister, REVERAEND THOMAS BARNARD, pushes through the crowd and approaches Leslie, who is standing next to Felt.

BARNARD

Colonel, Colonel, this is senseless. Surely you see you cannot force your way through. Bloodshed at this time would accomplish nothing.

LESLIE

Reverend, I have a mission here, and I mean to see it carried out.

BARNARD

Well, Captain Felt, surely men of peace and good will can find a way that will satisfy everyone's honor.

FELT

I can't see any, Reverend, unless the Colonel is willing to turn around and go back where he came from.

BARNARD

Don't give up so soon, Captain. Now Colonel, what is this mission that you're so urgent about?

LESLIE

I am to search the town and the iron forge yonder for weapons and powder, Reverend, and I mean to do it.

BARNARD

Well, I understand. A soldier must carry out his orders, whatever the risks to himself and his men. Surely you can understand that, can't you, Captain Felt?

FELT

Well, I suppose so.

BARNARD

But Colonel, I believe you've already searched the town, so that part of your mission is accomplished. Now, as to the forge, if Captain Felt here were willing to order the bridge lowered, would you be willing to give your word that you will march your men to the forge, but no further, search the forge and then turn around and return directly to your ship?

Leslie looks over to the forge and the growing number of armed men by the bridge and looks back at the Marblehead militia behind him. He recognizes his hopeless position.

LESLIE

We would have to seize any weapons and powder that we find.

BARNARD

Well, of course.

LESLIE

(grimly)

Agreed.

BARNARD

Is that acceptable to you, Captain Felt?

Felt considers a moment, then nods curtly.

BARNARD (continued)

Excellent, gentlemen. Let us praise God that good sense has prevailed here today.

Bystanders look at each other knowingly and smile.

INT. GAGE'S OFFICE - DAY

Gage, Leslie, Percy, Maddison and Smith are holding a meeting.

GAGE

Damn it! Damn it to hell! We've been made fools of. FOOLS!

LESLIE

I had no choice, General. We were greatly outnumbered and had no way to cross the river in any event.

SMITH

(contemptuously)

Outnumbered by farmers and fishermen.

GAGE

I don't question your actions, Colonel Leslie. I have no doubt you did what the circumstances required. But I'm very much afraid that word of this affair will greatly encourage the spirit of defiance among these people.

SMITH

We must break that spirit, General, before it consumes us. This rabble must be taught who is master here.

GAGE

And what would you have me do, Colonel Smith?

SMITH

Arrest the ringleaders, Warren, Adams, Hancock and the rest. Arrest this Captain Felt and the minister, Barnard.

GAGE

On what charges, Colonel? And no jury here would convict them anyway.

SMITH

Then don't bring them to trial. Or send them to England for trial. You must do something, General, to show these people you're not a . . . a . . . not to be defied at will.

GAGE

If this were France or Prussia, Colonel Smith, I could do those things. But this is not France or Prussia. These are colonies of Great Britain, and Great Britain, thank God, is ruled by laws and not by the whims of men. And as long as I am his Majesty's Governor here, gentlemen, that will continue to be the case in these colonies.

Gage paces back and forth.

GAGE (continued)

One thing this fiasco has taught me, however, gentlemen, is that the next time we embark on a mission of this kind, we must use forces large enough to make an impression - forces that cannot be bluffed by the local militia.

Gage looks straight at Leslie, who flushes.

INT - GREEN DRAGON TAVERN - NIGHT

The tavern is busy but not crowded. Paul Revere and Dr. Warren are standing by a high table near the door drinking ale.

WARREN

Tempers are rising, Paul. On both sides. I fear we may be nearing an explosion. That business at Salem was a close thing.

REVERE

Aye, you're right about that, Joseph.

The door opens and Samuel Dyer enters, looking very dark.

REVERE

Why Samuel Dyer! You're back!

DYER.

Aye, Revere. I'm back. Dr. Warren.

WARREN

It's good to see you again, Mr. Dyer. But what are you doing here? I'd heard you were pressed into the navy.

DYER

Aye, I was. But I got a paper here [patting his coat pocket] from a judge in London saying that the impressment was illegal, seein' as how I had a wife and a baby on the way.

WARREN

Well, that's wonderful.

DYER

You're wrong there, Dr. Warren. When I got back to Waltham, where Molly had gone to stay with her people, I found out she had died giving birth, and the baby too.

WARREN

I am very sorry to hear it, Mr. Dyer.

REVERE

(puts his hand on Dyer's shoulder)

I also, Samuel.

DYER

It was fretting over ME that killed her. I have no doubt of that. Those murdering bastards killed her as sure as if they'd blown her brains out with a musket. And I mean to make them pay for it, starting with that stinking coward, Maddison.

WARREN

Don't talk crazy, now, Mr. Dyer. That sort of thing will do nobody any good, least of all you.

EXT. A BOSTON STREET - DAY

Colonel Maddison and Lord Percy are ambling along one side of a street, conversing.

MADDISON

She's an uncommonly handsome woman, wouldn't you say, Lord Percy?

PERCY

Oh, indeed she is, Colonel Maddison. Unfortunately for the rest of us poor panting dogs, she's also uncommonly devoted to her husband.

MADDISON

So I

He looks around to see Samuel Dyer rushing at him from across the street with a cutlass raised over his head. Two men passing by leap at Dyer and stop him in the middle of the street. A third man comes up from behind and helps restrain Dyer. Three redcoats are approaching 30 yards away from the other direction. Maddison calls to them.

MADDISON

You men! Arrest that man!

As the soldiers move toward Dyer, he breaks away from his captors, turns and disappears down an alley.

EXT. - OUTSIDE BRITISH ARMY HEADQUARTERS - DAY

Gage, flanked by Captains Balfour and Brown, is walking briskly across the parade ground toward his office.

GAGE

This time, gentlemen, I mean to have them! I mean to bag the whole lot, by God!

The three officers enter the headquarters building. Two sentries, ramrod straight, flank the entrance.

INT - BRITISH ARMY HEADQUARTERS - DAY

The three men enter the antechamber to Gage's office. A LIEUTENANT seated at a desk stands to attention as they come in.

GAGE

Lieutenant, give my compliments to Colonels Smith, Leslie, Maddison and Lord Percy and ask them to attend me in my office.

LIEUTENANT

Sir!

INT - GAGE'S OFFICE - DAY

Gage, Smith, Leslie, Percy, Maddison and Captains Brown and Balfour are standing around a table with a map on it.

GAGE

Gentlemen, I have been getting reports from a number of sources over the past few weeks that the colonials have been storing large quantities of arms and powder in the village of Concord, here, about 20 mile to the west of Boston.

Gage points to Concord on the map.

GAGE (continued)

Last week I sent Captains Brown and Balfour, here, on a reconnaissance mission to scout out the town and the best approaches to it. They were dressed in plain country clothing and seem to have aroused no suspicion. Captain Brown, why don't you tell us what you discovered.

BROWN

Yes sir. We traveled by foot over this route here, through Brookline and Watertown and returned by this road here, through Lexington and Cambridge.

The camera focuses on map, as Brown points out the routes.

BROWN (continued)

The road through Brookline is heavily wooded and commanded by hills for most of the way, while the road through Lexington is much flatter and more open, through fields for most of the distance.

GAGE

So if we get into a fight, the road through Lexington would seem to afford much less opportunity for ambush and harassment. Would you agree, Captain?

BROWN

Definitely, sir.

GAGE

Go on.

BROWN

Well, we arrived in Concord in the early evening and stayed the night with a Mr. Bliss, a loyal subject of the Crown. Mr. Bliss said that the colonials have been moving large supplies of muskets, powder, shot and other provisions into an arsenal there.

BALFOUR

There were sentries posted all over town too.

BROWN

We left the next day at dawn.

MADDISON

Did anyone see you?

BROWN

I think not, sir.

GAGE

An excellent report, Captain. Now gentlemen, this time I intend to ensure we will have a sufficient force to carry out our mission, even if it comes to fighting. My plan is this. In three days time, April 18, Colonel Smith here, seconded by Colonel Maddison, will lead a force of some 800 men from Back Bay, here, where they will be carried over to Cambridge by longboats.

Gage points to Cambridge on the map.

GAGE (continued)

From Cambridge, they will march to Concord via Lexington, thoroughly search the town and seize and destroy all arms, powder, provisions, tents and all military stores whatever. Colonel Smith will leave just after dark on the 18th. He should be in Concord by dawn the next day, and, if all goes well, should be back in Cambridge by late afternoon on the 19th.

MADDISON

General, that's a 40-mile march in one day.

GAGE

I know it is, Colonel Maddison, but these are British regulars and they have been hardened to long marches and they will be led by experienced officers, including Colonel Smith and yourself. If we move boldly and in strength, they should have no trouble.

PERCY

What if the militia should mass against us, General? We know they are capable of raising a large number in very short order.

SMITH

Bah! Peasants and tradesmen who have never heard a shot fired in anger. They'll scatter at the first shot.

GAGE

Don't underestimate your enemy, Colonel Smith. I think they have courage enough. Some of them fought in the French wars, and they were brave enough then. I know. That is why secrecy and surprise must be our first care with this mission.

MADDISON

But if, by chance, they should assemble against us, General, what are our orders?

GAGE

Well, then, we shall just have to fight. I will not back down this time, gentlemen. If I did, we might as well all pack up and go home. Have I made myself clear?

ALL

Yes sir.

INT. GREEN DRAGON TAVERN - DAY

Revere and Warren are seated at a table.

WARREN

So, what's your news?

REVERE

I think the redcoats are planning to move on Concord, Joseph.

WARREN

What makes you think so?

REVERE

Well, several things. First, Gage sent out a couple of spies last week. They spent the night in Concord with that Tory lawyer, Bliss. I have reports from at least a dozen people who saw them there and on the road.

WARREN

All right, what else?

REVERE

Then just this afternoon, the ships in the harbor have been putting their longboats in the water. There are about 20 of them tied up behind their mother ships. It certainly looks like they are planning to move some troops.

WARREN

It certainly does. Do you have any idea where and when?

REVERE

No. My people are hanging about the barracks and the docks with their ears open, but so far, they've learned nothing more.

WARREN

We'll, we'd best get word to the people in Concord to start removing the supplies to safer places. You know, Sam Adams and John Hancock are in Lexington at this moment meeting with the committee there. We should send word to them, too.

REVERE

I'll send a man right away.

WARREN

But we must try to learn exactly when the soldiers plan to move and by what route. We can't have another false alarm, like that fiasco at Medford last September.

REVERE

I agree. I'm doing everything I can.

WARREN

I have a source or two I'll try as well. Even if we can't get the information in advance, we must be ready to spread the alarm the instant the redcoats move.

REVERE

I've made those arrangements, and I have a good network of men ready to ride at a moment's notice.

WARREN

Good. And if you see Dr. Church, let him know about all this as well.

REVERE

I don't know, Joseph. I think for the present we should keep the people who know about this to as few as possible.

WARREN

Well, perhaps you're right.

REVERE

You know, Joseph, this could be the match that sets the country ablaze. The people's temper is just about to boil over.

WARREN

I think you're right, Paul. But on that, I agree with Sam Adams and a good many others. The break with England has to come sooner or later, and it's probably best to come sooner, before the redcoats reinforce and become too strong for us.

REVERE

Aye, perhaps so.

INT - GAGE'S BEDROOM - NIGHT

Gage and Margaret are preparing for bed. She is combing her hair before her dressing table and mirror. He is taking off his uniform.

MARGARET

You seem unusually careworn tonight, my dear.

GAGE

Yes, I've had a lot on my mind these past few weeks.

MARGARET

Can you tell me about it?

GAGE

Oh, I don't want to burden you with my troubles.

MARGARET

Come to bed then, Tom.

INT - GAGE'S BEDROOM - NIGHT

Gage and Margaret are lying in bed in the dark looking upward, his arm around her.

GAGE

I'm worried for the future, my dear.

MARGARET

Why, Tom?

GAGE

Well, we seem to be heading inexorably toward armed conflict, and there's nothing I can do about it.

MARGARET

Perhaps if you let up on them, that would ease the tensions.

GAGE

I wish it were so, my sweet, but that seems only to embolden them. In any case, our policy here is set mainly in London. I have very little say in it. All I can try to do is take away the matches that might start the fire - or at least reduce the means that can be used to fight against us if it comes to that. So far, our efforts have met with only mixed success. Tomorrow night we shall try again, and I pray to God we are successful. Good night my love.

Gage kisses her and then turns on his side and closes his eyes. Margaret continues to stare wide-eyed at the ceiling.

EXT - REVERE'S HOUSE - DAY

Joseph Warren knocks urgently on Revere's door. Revere opens it.

WARREN

Paul, I've just got word. They're moving tonight.

REVERE

Are you certain?

WARREN

Quite certain.

REVERE

By which route?

WARREN

That I don't know. From the longboats in the harbor, my guess is they'll be ferried over to Charleston and march through Lexington to Concord. But I'm not sure.

REVERE

All right. I'll have my men ready.

EXT. BOSTON STREET - DAY

Benjamin Church is talking with two other MEN on a street corner in Boston.

FIRST MAN

What's your opinion, Dr. Church?

CHURCH

Well, I think we shall just have to wait and see.

Church sees Paul Revere walking on the other side of the street.

CHURCH (continued)

Excuse me, gentlemen.

Church hurries across the street to speak to Revere, who stops as Church approaches. Church tips his hat to Revere.

CHURCH (continued)

Good morning, Revere.

REVERE

Good morning, Dr. Church.

CHURCH

Any word when the redcoats will move next?

Revere gives Church an appraising look.

REVERE

No, Doctor. Not a word.

CHURCH

Hmm. Well, please send word to me as soon as you hear anything. I shall be at my dispensary.

REVERE

I'll try, Doctor.

CHURCH

I'm much obliged.

Church tips his hat again and departs.

INT. CHURCH'S DISPENSARY, DAY

MRS. CHURCH is inside Church's dispensary putting a bottle on a shelf when Church enters from the street.

MRS. CHURCH

Benjamin, where have you been all morning?

CHURCH

Committee business.

MRS. CHURCH

That committee will be the ruin of us. You had two patients this morning, Mrs. Peabody and Mr. Cabot, by to see you, but after waiting an hour or so, they left.

CHURCH

Damn! Did they say when they'd be back?

MRS CHURCH

No. They both said they'd try Dr. Warren. Committee work doesn't seem to hurt his practice, and he's head of the committee!

CHURCH

Dr. Warren can go to the Devil for all I care!

MRS. CHURCH

And the butcher was by about his bill.

Church stalks angrily into his office and slams the door behind him.

INT - OWEN'S BARRACKS - NIGHT

Owen's company is waiting for the order to march. The room is lit only by two candles. Most men are sitting or lying in their beds in their shirtsleeves. Owen is lying on his bed on his back. Reggie is sitting on the edge, and HARRY MARTIN, a thin 18-year old hot with fever, is lying on the next bunk.

REGGIE

Harry, you don't look so good.

HARRY

I'm not feeling too well, Reggie.
It's the fever, and chills.

REGGIE

You shouldn't be going on this march,
then.

HARRY

Oh, I'll be all right. The last time
I got sick and missed a march, the
sergeant acted like I was shirking.
Made me feel real bad.

REGGIE

You sure?

Sergeant Lamb enters.

LAMB

All right, men. It's time to go. Now
remember, quiet as mice through the town.
Your life may depend on it.

REGGIE

Where are we going, sergeant?

LAMB

I have no idea. Maybe just another training march. You'll know when you get there.

OWEN

Sergeant, Martin here's got a fever and chills. I think maybe he'd best stay.

LAMB

What, again? Is this true, Martin?

HARRY

I think I'll be all right, sergeant.

LAMB

Well, fall in then. And be quick about it.

The men put on their red jackets, hats and field packs.

EXT - BACK BAY - 10 P.M.

Back Bay, Boston - 10 p.m. April 18, 1775.

Colonel Smith and Maddison are watching the troops being packed into longboats, so tightly they must stand.

SMITH

There's not enough longboats for all the men. We shall have to make two trips. Damn! What time do you have, Colonel?

MADDISON

Just 10 o'clock, Colonel Smith.

SMITH

Damn!

INT - SHED OF THE OLD NORTH CHURCH - NIGHT

Patience is sitting alone in the shed, waiting.

PATIENCE

(under her breath)
I can't wait any longer.

EXT - SHED OF THE OLD NORTH CHURCH - NIGHT

As Patience quietly leaves the shed, she hears a noise overhead. She looks up and sees two lanterns hanging outside the window of the steeple and being swung to and fro. She watches a moment, then departs quickly.

EXT - FRONT OF THE OLD NORTH CHURCH - NIGHT

Patience comes around the corner of the church and walks quickly past the front door and almost collides with young THOMAS BERNARD, standing guard.

BERNARD

Why, Mistress Hammond. You're out late.

PATIENCE

Mr. Bernard! What are you doing here? I saw the light from the steeple. What's afoot?

BERNARD

The redcoats! They're marching to Concord to seize the supplies.

PATIENCE

What? Now?

BERNARD

Now indeed. This very moment, they're being rowed across Back Bay. We're sending a signal to friends in Charleston to let them know they're on their way. They'll have a hot welcome when they get to Concord tomorrow, that's for sure.

PATIENCE

Oh my God! Owen!

BERNARD

Owen? Who's Owen?

Patience runs off without answering.

INT - THE HAMMOND HOUSE - NIGHT

Patience bursts into The house. Her mother and sister MAGGIE are knitting. Patience is agitated and distraught.

PATIENCE

Mother! Maggie! The soldiers are marching on Concord! There may be fighting! Oh my God. What shall we do?

MRS HAMMOND

Calm down, girl. What's this you're saying?

PATIENCE

The soldiers. The redcoats. They're marching on Concord. The militias are being called out.

MRS HAMMOND

Where did you hear this?

PATIENCE

From Thomas Bernard at the Old North Church. He and some others were sending a signal over to Charleston to spread the alarm and call out the militias.

MRS HAMMOND

Oh my God.

PATIENCE

But mother. What shall we do? This is terrible! We must do something!

MRS HAMMOND

Patience, there's nothing WE can do. It's in God's hands now.

Patience paces about very agitated.

PATIENCE

Oh my God! Oh, my God.

Mrs. Hammond looks at her sharply and exchanges glances with Maggie.

MRS HAMMOND

Patience, is there something you're not telling us?

PATIENCE

Mother! Don't you understand? This may mean war. Fighting and killing. Father and Silas and Ned, all our friends. All our . . . loved ones.

Patience breaks down, weeping. Her mother puts an arm around her to comfort her, but exchanges another questioning glance with Maggie.

EXT - THE CAMBRIDGE MARSHES - NIGHT

The full moon is rising over the bay. The longboats are unloading troops. The boats run aground in the shallow water, forcing the soldiers to get out in knee-deep water and wade ashore. The grenadiers wear tall, bearskin caps. The shore is swampy, many men standing ankle-deep in water.

One barge unloads horses for the officers.

Colonel Smith is fussing about, placing different regiments in different places. He and the others keep their voices just above a whisper. The men mill about in confusion.

MADDISON

Colonel Smith, shouldn't we get these men moving out of this swamp?

SMITH

Not until we have each company in the proper marching order, Colonel Maddison. I went over that this morning. Companies of the 4th Foot at the head of the column, followed by those of the 5th, and so forth. You there, Major Pitcairn, get your men over here.

EXT - CAMBRIDGE MARSHES - NIGHT

The moon is higher. The troops are finally arranged in proper order. Colonel Smith is very agitated.

SMITH
 (looking at his watch)
 Finally! Almost one o'clock! Damn!
 Colonel Maddison, you may proceed.

The officers mount their horses and the column begins to march through the swamp.

CAMBRIDGE MARSHES - NIGHT

The men march with difficulty through the swamp. Some men stumble and sink to their thighs and waists.

A ROAD IN THE CAMBRIDGE MARSHES - NIGHT

The column finally comes out onto a muddy road in the swamp. Smith and the others keep their voices down.

SMITH
 Companies! Halt! [to Colonel Maddison].
 We shall wait here for the rations.

MADDISON
 What rations, Colonel? My men brought their rations with them.

SMITH
 (with irritation)
 Evidently you didn't get the word, Colonel. The navy is supplying the rations for this mission. To avoid rousing suspicion.

MADDISON
 No, Colonel, I did not. But can't whoever is bringing them catch up with us on the road?

SMITH
 No, they may not find us. We will wait here. They should be here shortly.

The men stand, wet and shivering. The camera focus on Owen, Reggie and Harry Martin, whose teeth are chattering.

A ROAD IN THE CAMBRIDGE MARSHES - NIGHT

A file of 40 sailors appears, two sailors each carry a box of rations between them. Smith faces a NAVY LIEUTENANT.

SMITH

Well, it's about time! We've been waiting a good hour. What took you so long?

NAVY LIEUTENANT

We came as fast as we could, Colonel.

SMITH

Well, hurry up, then, and distribute what you have to the men.

The sailors hand out rations from the boxes to the troops. Owen and Reggie take theirs.

REGGIE

Ugh! Hardtack and salt port. I'll do with what I brought.

He tosses away the rations into the woods.

EXT - THE ROAD TO LEXINGTON - NIGHT

The head of the column is marching through the countryside. Camera focuses on Owen and Reggie. Suddenly they hear church bells in the distance, then dogs barking and people calling. Lights go on in distant houses. They dimly see a man galloping on a parallel road, 100 yards away.

OWEN

Looks like the bees are starting to swarm.

REGGIE

Yep.

EXT - THE ROAD TO LEXINGTON - NIGHT

Colonel Smith is riding next to Colonel Maddison by the side of the column, somewhere in the middle of it. The men are marching briskly. They hear bells and shouting and see lights going on.

SMITH

I fear the countryside is aroused
now, despite all our efforts.

MADDISON

Yes, but we're making good time now.
Four miles an hour, I should say. We
should still get there before they can
assemble much of a force.

SMITH

Yes, but we must get back, too.

EXT - LEXINGTON - NIGHT

Paul Revere gallops into Lexington, shouting.

REVERE

To arms! To arms! The soldiers are
coming. Everybody up.

He bangs on the door of the Clarke parsonage.

REVERE (continued)

Come on, everybody up!

Lights go on. Sam Adams opens an upstairs window and puts
his head out.

ADAMS

Revere, is that you?

REVERE

Yes it is, Sam. Get up. The redcoats
are on the march, on their way to
Concord. Is Mr. Hancock there with you?

Hancock sticks his head out of the window.

HANCOCK

I am, indeed, Revere. Come in and
tell us the news.

Revere dismounts. Reverend CLARKE and his son BENJAMIN
exit the front door and greet Revere.

CLARK

Come in, Mr. Revere. Benjamin, rub down Mr. Revere's horse and give it water and oats.

BENJAMIN

Yes, father.

INT - KITCHEN OF THE CLARK PARSONAGE - NIGHT

Hancock, Adams, Mr. and Mrs. Clark, two other sons and two daughters and several other men are standing around a table at which Revere is seated drinking ale and eating bread and cheese.

ADAMS

What have you done to spread the alarm?

REVERE

Well, I rode here from Charleston through Medford and Arlington and aroused almost every house along the way. Harwood and Alston rode from Charleston to the towns north and east. The militia is mustering in Medford and riders have gone out from there as well. William Dawes is riding here from Boston through Brookline, Cambridge and Waltham. He should have been here by now.

Just then, the door opens and Dawes comes in.

REVERE (continued)

Ah, here he is now. William, come in and have something to eat and drink. Then you and I must be off to Concord.

Mr. Clarke turns to two of his sons, SIMON and Jacob.

MR. CLARK

Simon, go to the church and ring the bells. Jacob, run to Captain Parker's house and tell him to come here.

EXT - CLARK HOUSE - NIGHT

Revere and Dawes mount their horses. The church bell is tolling. Lights are on in neighboring houses. Adams, Hancock, Clarke and a dozen others are standing about.

ADAMS

God speed, Paul. We'll send other riders north and east, as we discussed.

REVERE

Good. And you two make sure you're not caught. They may well be looking for you.

HANCOCK

If they're looking for me, they shall have no trouble finding me, for I shall be standing with the Lexington militia in the green, musket in hand.

ADAMS

The cause has better uses for you than carrying a musket, John Hancock.

REVERE

He's right, Mr. Hancock.

Revere and Dawes canter off.

EXT - LEXINGTON GREEN - NIGHT

30 or so men are milling about the green, rifles in hand. The church bell is tolling slowly in the distance. CALEB JONES approaches HENRY PUTNAM.

JONES

Hello, Henry.

PUTNAM

Hello, Caleb

JONES

This is a bad business.

PUTNAM

It is that.

JONES

How many of 'em are there, have ye heard?

PUTNAM

John Parker says somewhere between 500 and 1000, probably.

Jones looks about at the handful of men gathered and just shakes his head.

PUTNAM

What about your son, Jonathan, Caleb?

Jones looks over to his house; a candle is moving behind a second-story window.

JONES

I didn't wake him, Henry. He's only 16. His mother would never forgive me.

INT - JONATHAN'S BEDROOM - NIGHT

The camera focuses on the sleeping JONATHAN, and then on his mother, MRS JONES, coming into the room with a candle. She shakes the boy awake, a look of grim determination on her face.

MRS JONES

Jonathan! Jonathan! Wake up! The regulars are coming, and something must be done!

As he swings his head groggily over the bed and stands up, she hands him a rifle.

EXT - THE ROAD TO LEXINGTON - EARLY DAWN

Camera focuses on Owen and Reggie, marching wearily near the head of the column in the early dawn. Major Pitcairn and Captain Balfour are riding at the head of the column; behind them, a drummer boy is beating a march cadence. The slow tolling of the Lexington church bell can be heard in the distance. Looking to their right, Owen and Reggie see dozens of men silhouetted against the early dawn light jogging or walking fast toward Lexington, rifles in hand.

EXT - LEXINGTON GREEN - DAWN

About 80 militia are lined up on the green in two rows. Putnam, Jones and Jonathan are in the front row. John Parker, the militia captain, is standing in front of the men. Other townspeople are gathered on the sides of the green. The British drummer can be heard, faintly, approaching.

PARKER

Steady, boys. Nobody do anything,
'cept on my express orders.

Parker coughs a deep cough and spits on the ground.

JONES

(quietly to Putnam)

Captain Parker fought with Wolfe at
Quebec, you know. And then with Rogers
Rangers. He knows what he's about.

PUTNAM

(looking about)

I hope so. We ain't got mor'n 80 men,
by my count.

ON THE ROAD APPROACHING LEXINGTON GREEN - DAWN

The head of the British column comes in sight of the militia.

REGGIE

How many of 'em are there, Owen?

OWEN

I'm not sure. Looks like a couple of
hundred.

EXT - LEXINGTON GREEN - DAWN

Parker addresses his men.

PARKER

Stand your ground, boys, but let the
troops pass by. Don't fire unless fired
upon.

EXT - LEXINGTON GREEN - DAWN

As the British column approaches with 70 yards of the militia, Major Pitcairn, mounted, raises his hand and the drumming stops.

PITCAIRN

Company, halt! Captain Balfour, deploy your company.

BALFOUR

Company! By the flank! Line of battle!

The first 80 men form in two rows facing the militia in a swirl of movement, men from the back sprinting forward. Other companies form similar lines behind them. The soldiers give the British army cheer, Huzza! Huzza! as they form up. Pitcairn approaches the militia, and the redcoats become quiet.

PITCAIRN

You men, throw down you arms and disperse!

The militiamen do not move.

PITCAIRN (continued)

You damned rebels! Disperse now, do you hear!

PARKER

Don't fire, boys. Save it for another day. Hold on to your guns, but disperse, like he says.

The British soldiers stand holding their muskets across their chests. Owen sees some of the militia begin to withdraw, but some stand where they are.

O.S. Suddenly, a gunshot is heard. Owen glances left and sees two men, holding rifles, move quickly behind a wall.

O.S. Another shot is heard from the other side of the green. Owen looks in that direction.

Some of the soldiers begin shooting. Owen sees the men behind the wall raise their rifles. He aims and fires at them, hitting one in the arm. Owen sees some of the militia returning fire.

O.S. Amid the confusion, he hears:

BALFOUR
Company! Present! Fire!

A great volley rips out like the sound of a giant sheet tearing, and a cloud of smoke covers the green. A moment of shocked silence, then the militia and the surrounding spectators scatter, many screaming.

Chaotic movements show soldiers running, in all directions, shooting at fleeing shapes, searching behind hedges and walls and in houses. Pitcairn and Balfour try vainly to recall them. Confusion reigns.

Colonels Smith and Maddison arrive on the scene on horseback. Smith is horrified at what he sees. He rides over to Balfour.

SMITH
Captain Balfour! Find a drummer! Now!

BALFOUR
Yes sir.

Balfour rides off.

O.S. A few moments later, the steady pounding of a drum reverberates over the green. Slowly, the soldiers return and line up in column.

LEXINGTON GREEN - MORNING

Colonels Smith and Maddison, Major Pitcairn and Captains Brown and Balfour are on horseback together, watching the last of the soldiers get into column, ready to march. The bodies of seven militia lie scattered on the green behind them.

SMITH

This is a bad business. Very bad. I shall expect a full report, Major Pitcairn. But right now, we must move on. Concord is still five miles ahead of us.

BROWN

Concord? But Colonel, with all respect, shouldn't we return to Boston now, what with the countryside fully aroused against us, as it is.

MADDISON

I agree, Colonel. At this point, our mission has become impracticable.

Smith considers this a moment, looks around anxiously, and then replies wearily.

SMITH

I appreciate the candor of your views, gentlemen. But I have my orders, and I intend to obey them. I sent a rider an hour ago to General Gage for reinforcements, and he told me yesterday that he would have Lord Percy's brigade in readiness to assist us if needed. In any case, we must do our duty, gentlemen. Move the men out.

EXT - LEXINGTON GREEN - MORNING

Seven bodies lie scattered about the empty green in complete silence. Then a lone woman appears, approaching slowly, in shock. One by one, others appear and approach the green. When the first woman gets to within 20 yards of a body, she utters a cry, runs to it and falls upon it, wailing.

Mrs. Jones and Jonathan, dragging his rifle, come behind her. Mrs. Jones sees Caleb's body, shrieks, and runs to him, wailing.

MRS JONES

CALEB!

EXT - LEXINGTON GREEN - MORNING

Hundreds of people are gathered on the green, many crying, others declaiming angrily. One MAN paces about shaking his fist in anger.

MAN

By what right?! By what RIGHT do they come into this village and murder their own people? BY WHAT RIGHT?

Captain Parker is standing with 40 or 50 militia, including Henry Putnam and Jonathan Jones. Some have bloody bandages. Cold anger has replaced shock.

Parker coughs up bloody phlegm and spits it on the ground.

PARKER

All right, men. Fall in. We've a long day ahead of us.

EXT - ON A HILL OUTSIDE CONCORD - MORNING

Concord, Massachusetts, April 19, 1775 - 9 a.m

Two hundred militia stand in formation on the top of a hill a mile east of Concord, overlooking the road. They hear the distant drum of the approaching British. Six officers, all in plain clothes, stand together in front of the formation looking in the direction of the approaching redcoats. They include the commander, stout, 64-year-old COLONEL JAMES BARRETT, in a long flapping coat and a slouch hat, his son-in-law, CAPTAIN MINOT and hot-blooded young LIEUTENANT JOSEPH HOSMER.

HOSMER

I say we make a stand here, before they get to the town. The position is a good one. We'll be above them and attacking their flank from behind the wall there as they pass on the road.

MINOT

What do you think, Colonel Barrett?

BARRETT

The position is a good one, I agree. But I think we should wait. We are far outnumbered at present, with only 200 or so, but more are coming every minute. I think the longer we wait, the better.

HOSMER

Are we to turn tail, then, and let them stroll into our town unopposed? The men are ready to fight, Colonel!

Barrett makes no reply as he watches the head of the British column come into view. They all watch nervously as more and more soldiers come into view, the morning sun glinting off their guns and bayonets.

EXT - THE ROAD TO CONCORD - MORNING

Colonels Smith and Maddison are riding at the head of the column. They observe the militia force on the hill. Smith turns to the column behind him.

SMITH

Captain Balfour, have your company advance against those men on the hill. Captain Brown, your company will follow in support. If they retreat, have your company advance toward the town on a parallel course, protecting our flank at about 200 yards distance. Captain Brown, your company should follow Captain Balfour's on the same course.

As Balfour and Brown shout orders, the lead companies leave the column and spread out with impressive speed and efficiency in a formation facing the hill, each company with two rows of 30 men. Balfour dismounts, hands the reins of his horse to another officer and leads his men up the hill.

REGGIE

This is it, Owen.

OWEN

Steady on, man.

When Balfour's company gets halfway up the hill, the militia are seen to turn abruptly and disappear.

SMITH

Ha! See, colonel, what did I tell you. These people are just an armed mob, without discipline or leadership.

EXT. - ON THE HILLTOP OUTSIDE CONCORD - MORNING

Balfour's company gets to the top of the hill and forms into a column.

BALFOUR

Sergeant Lamb, take a squad of 10 men and keep an eye on those people. But keep your distance and send a report to me in the town center.

LAMB

Yes sir.

Lamb picks Owen, Reggie and seven others. They trot off after the retreating militia as Balfour leads the rest of his company on a march parallel to the main column. Captain Brown's company follows.

EXT - CONCORD COMMON - MORNING

The British troops march into a largely deserted common, with Smith, Maddison and Pitcairn riding in the lead. A few old men and women glare at the British. As the van arrives and halts, Balfour's and Brown's companies enter the common from the right. Balfour walks up to Smith and salutes.

SMITH

Captain, where are the militia?

BALFOUR

I sent a squad to follow them, Colonel, with orders to report to me here. Here they are now.

Owen and Reggie come running up to the group from the north, panting, and salute.

BALFOUR

Corporal Tolliver, what news of the militia?

OWEN

Sir, they crossed a stream over a bridge about a mile to the north of here and went up a hill about a quarter mile beyond the stream. That's where they were when we came back to report. Sergeant Lamb and the others are at the bridge.

SMITH

Thank you, corporal. Colonel Maddison, take seven companies and secure the bridge north of town. Leave three companies to guard the bridge and take the rest to the house and mill two miles further on. Our information is that there's a large store of munitions there. Destroy whatever you find of military value.

MADDISON

Yes, sir.

Maddison departs to select his companies,

SMITH

Major Pitcairn, send one company to secure the bridge to the east of town. That should be sufficient.

PITCAIRN

Yes sir.

Pitcairn departs. Smith addresses Captain Brown, who is on foot.

SMITH

Captain Brown, have the other companies search the town and bring all arms, munitions and military supplies back here.

BROWN

Yes sir.

EXT - CONCORD'S NORTH BRIDGE - DAY

Colonel Maddison and Captain Balfour lead 7 companies (about 300 men) to the North Bridge spanning the Concord River. Hills look down on the bridge from across the river. Sergeant Lamb with four other soldiers are waiting at the bridge. Lamb salutes Maddison and Balfour.

MADDISON

Any sign of the militia, Sergeant?

LAMB

Yes, sir. They're up on that hill across the river, just watching us.

MADDISON

Can you tell how many?

LAMB

We counted just over 200 crossing the bridge, but more are joining them all the time.

MADDISON

Captain Balfour, I'll leave you here in charge of the light infantry companies of the 4th, 10th and 43d Foot to guard the bridge while I take the rest on to the mill.

BALFOUR

Very good, sir.

EXT - ON THE HILL BEYOND THE NORTH BRIDGE - DAY

Colonel Barrett, Captain Minot, Lieutenant Hosmer and three other militia officers stand in front of 500 militia in formation on a flat-topped hill about 300 yards from the North Bridge. They look down on the bridge as Colonel Madison leads 180 men away to the west on a road along the north side of the river and as two of Balfour's three companies deploy on the north side of the bridge and one company remains at the south end of the bridge.

HOSMER

Colonel Barrett, look. They're dividing their force. Now's the time to attack. We have almost 500 men now.

BARRETT

No, not yet. Let's wait and see what they do.

Hosmer looks disgusted.

EXT - CONCORD COMMON - DAY

Colonel Smith is on his horse on the common. Captain Brown stands before him. Soldiers are moving about from house to house. A group of soldiers has assembled four gun carriages, blankets and half a dozen muskets into a pile in front of Smith.

SMITH

Is this all you've found, Captain?

BROWN

Yes sir, so far.

SMITH

Well, set fire to the pile, Captain.

BROWN

Yes, sir. Sergeant Hancock, burn the pile.

The sergeant lights the pile, which soon sends up plumes of black smoke.

ON THE HILL BEYOND THE NORTH BRIDGE - DAY

The men on the mill see the black smoke rising from the town in the distance.

HOSMER

Will you let them burn the town, Colonel Barrett?!

CAPTAIN MINOT

We're ready, Colonel. There's not a man here who's afraid to go.

BARRETT
(turning to the men)
Load your weapons, men.

Colonel Barrett walks along the front of the assembled men.

BARRETT (continued)
Now listen, men. We're going to march down to the bridge in double file, the Concord regiment in the lead. Stay calm and in good order, and, above all, do NOT fire unless and until the soldiers fire first. But if they do, keep your ranks steady, listen to the commands of your officers and return fire as fast as you can. Major Buttrick, you may proceed.

EXT - NORTH BRIDGE - DAY

O.S. the sound of a drummer in the distance. Owen, Reggie and a shivering Harry Martin, deployed on the militia's side of the bridge, look up as they hear it. They watch as 500 militia march double-file, snaking down the hill in a large "C" toward them. When the head of the column gets within 50 yards, the column and the drumming stop.

Two lines of militia, each two ranks deep, face the soldiers at the bridge. They hold their rifles before them, but not aimed.

REGGIE
That doesn't look like an undisciplined mob to me, Owen.

OWEN
Nor to me, Reggie.

BALFOUR
All right, men. Fall back across the bridge and form for street firing.

HARRY
What's street-firing formation, Owen?

OWEN

It's complicated. Just watch me closely.

The soldiers move quickly back across the bridge, colliding with the company already on the south side. In some confusion, the soldiers form in a tight, crowded formation, front ranks kneeling, facing the militia.

The soldiers look frightened. Harry suddenly raises his musket and fires. Captain Balfour turns to look, horrified.

BALFOUR

I gave no order to fire!

Other soldiers also begin firing. The first rank lets off a ragged volley. Owen, looking across at the militia, sees several men fall.

CAPTAIN MINOT

FIRE, boys, for God's sake, fire!

The militia commence firing, steadily and accurately. Soldiers, including four officers in their scarlet uniforms, begin crying out and falling. The firing on both sides continues for 10 seconds, and then the soldiers begin to run for their lives.

Balfour and other officers try vainly to hold them, and finally follow their fleeing men.

One of the fleeing soldiers, Harry Martin, is hit in the back, cries out, falls and is left behind in the road by the others.

EXT - ON THE HILL BEYOND NORTH BRIDGE - DAY

Colonel Barrett, on the hill behind the militia, with four other men, watches the soldiers running pell mell toward Concord. Barrett turns to Captain Minot.

BARRETT

Well, for heaven's sake. Will you look at that. The high and mighty British army ain't so high and mighty as they thought.

CAPTAIN MINOT

What do we do now, Colonel?

BARRETT

Have some men gather up the wounded and take them to the house over there. Move the rest of the men across the bridge and take up a position to the east of the town behind the stone wall.

EXT - NORTH BRIDGE - DAY

The militia march across the North Bridge in a tight, double file column. They pass by three dead and three wounded redcoats at the bridge and on the road, the last being Harry Martin, moaning with a bullet in his back.

As they are disappearing out of sight, SILAS, a half-witted youth of 18, comes after them on a lurching run. As he passes Harry, he stops and leers and draws a hunting knife. He reaches down, grabs Harry by the hair and (off camera) scalps him as Harry screams. Silas holds up the bloody scalp with a leer and lurches after the militia.

EXT - A STONE WALL - DAY

The militia are formed up behind a stone wall below the crest of a low hill. Lieutenant Hosmer is at the end of the line closest to the bridge. Silas runs up to him.

SILAS

Joseph! Joseph! Look what I got!

He holds up the scalp. Hosmer and the men near him react with horror and disgust.

HOSMER

Ah, you godless savage! That's disgusting! Get out of my sight, you bloody half-wit!

Hosmer raises his musket as if to club the youth, who slinks off hurriedly, puzzled and wretched. Hosmer shakes his head in disgust.

EXT - CONCORD COMMON - DAY

Colonel Smith, Captain Brown and others are watching the fire when they hear heavy firing in the direction of the bridge.

SMITH

That's no mere skirmishing, gentlemen. Captain Brown, assemble the grenadiers at once. Major Pitcairn, gather up the rest of the companies and get them ready to march while I go with Captain Brown and the grenadiers to help our men at the bridge.

EXT - ON THE ROAD TO THE NORTH BRIDGE - DAY

Smith and Brown lead a column of 100 bearskin-capped grenadiers toward the bridge. They encounter the fleeing soldiers. Smith turns to the troops behind him.

SMITH

Let them pass, men. (To the retreating soldiers) You men reform in the town center.

Captain Balfour appears.

SMITH (continued)

What happened, Captain?

BALFOUR

The militia came down from the hill across the river and fired on us, sir. I tried to hold our men, but there were too many of them.

SMITH

Where's Colonel Maddison and his men?

BALFOUR

They hadn't returned when we were attacked.

SMITH

Well, go back with your men and form them up, ready to march. I'll go with Captain Brown and these men to the bridge to try to hold the road open for Colonel Maddison.

ON THE ROAD NEAR THE NORTH BRIDGE - DAY

Smith and Brown at the head of the column come within sight of the North Bridge, 100 yards away. On a hill to their right, about 200 yards away, they see the militia formed up behind a stone wall. Smith halts the column.

SMITH

Captain Brown, form the men up facing the militia.

Brown forms the men up along the east side of the road, in two rows, the first row kneeling.

SMITH

There! I think that's Colonel Maddison's force coming now.

Over the bridge in the distance comes Maddison's column, running. They run up to Smith, Maddison, on horseback, at the rear.

SMITH

You men fall in beside the grenadiers.

MADDISON

What's happended, Colonel? We heard firing.

SMITH

Bad business, Colonel Maddison. Captain Balfour's companies were attacked at the bridge and driven off by the militia yonder. We must return to Boston as fast as possible.

EXT - CONCORD COMMON - DAY

The British troops are in formation, ready to march. A half dozen assorted wagons, carriages and surreys hitched to horses and mules are assembled in the center of the column, carrying wounded. Smith, Maddison and Pitcairn are together on horseback.

MADDISON

The men are ready, Colonel Smith.

SMITH

All right. Are you sure you've found all the conveyances in the town for the wounded?

MADDISON

Yes sir, and all the horses. But two of the men are so badly hurt I'm afraid that the journey back may kill them.

SMITH

Well then, we have no choice but to leave them to the mercy of the people here. Did you find any stores in the house beyond the bridge?

MADDISON

No sir, almost nothing.

SMITH

DAMN ME. What a waste.

PITCAIRN

I don't know why the militia there have not made another attack since the bridge.

SMITH

They probably know they've got all day, Major, and would rather hit us when we're on the move and strung out than here, where we're consolidated. I pray that courier I sent to General Gage for reinforcements made it through.

EXT - THE ROAD BETWEEN CONCORD AND LEXINGTON - DAY

Colonel Smith and Major Pitcairn are riding at the head of the column. The troops are hurrying along, looking about nervously. Smith turns to look back on the long, snaking column. Horse-drawn wagons and chaises carrying wounded soldiers are interspersed along the column.

PITCAIRN

We seem to have gotten away from them, Colonel.

SMITH

I wouldn't count on it, major. But so far our flankers on the ridge have kept them away from the column. There's a fork in the road ahead where the flankers will have to rejoin the column. We may have a fight there.

EXT - THE ROAD APPROACHING A FORK IN THE ROAD - DAY

Colonel Smith and Major Pitcairn approach Merriam's corner, a fork in the road 100 yards ahead of them. To the left of the road, a ridge slopes down, ending shortly before the fork. Seventy redcoats can be seen coming off the ridge and converging with the column.

PITCAIRN

There's our flankers, Colonel.

SMITH

Yes, I see them. Keep the column moving, major. I'm going ahead to talk to Captain Balfour.

Smith kicks his horse and trots heavily ahead.

EXT - AT THE FORK - DAY

Captain Balfour is standing by his 70 men, who are formed up in the road as Colonel Smith rides up. Owen and Reggie are in the group.

SMITH

What sign of the militia, Captain?

BALFOUR

They're forming up on the north side of the road, Colonel, just past the barn there.

SMITH

How many are there?

BALFOUR

It's hard to say, sir. At least 500. Probably more.

SMITH

Well, we have no choice but to push through as quick as we can. You and your men will lead the column. If you're fired upon, deploy your men as far as possible on the north side of the road to cover the column as it passes.

BALFOUR

Yes sir.

By this time, the rest of the column comes up to them.

SMITH

Go ahead, Captain Balfour. Lead the way.

ON THE ROAD BEYOND THE FORK - DAY

Owen and Reggie are quick-marching side by side in the lead company as they pass Merriam's corner, a fork in the road where the Lexington road bears right. Ahead of them, about 200 yards north of the Lexington road they can see a line of militia waiting for them.

REGGIE

Jesus, Owen. Look at em all!

OWEN

Just keep moving, Reggie.

REGGIE

How the devil are we gonna get back to Boston, Owen? We've got a good 20 miles more, and we've already been marching 12 hours straight.

Owen, looking grim, makes no reply.

REGGIE (continued)

I just wish they hadn't kept us standing in that cold water all that time last night.

The column marches on in silence another 15 seconds.

O.S., a shot is heard from the militia in the distance.

BALFOUR

Company! By the flank! Line up on me and Lieutenant Barker.

Balfour runs out from the road about 40 yards in the direction of the militia. Barker moves out to a position 50 yards from Balfour. The company lines up between them in two rows, the first row kneeling.

Two more shots are heard, O.S..

BALFOUR (continued)

First rank, present! Fire!

The kneeling rank aims and fires at the militia, but without apparent effect. The militia kneel and return fire, not in unison.

The kneeling redcoats get up and move behind the second rank to reload as the second rank kneels. Lieutenant Barker, in his scarlet uniform and sword upraised, cries out and falls back, clutching his chest.

BALFOUR (continued)

First rank, present! Fire!

Another volley, and several militia men are seen to fall. As Owen is reloading, a soldier beside him is hit. Then another soldier cries out and falls.

Owen sees another company of redcoats deploy to the right of his company and begin firing. He looks back and sees the main column hurrying along the road. He sees several soldiers fall.

The firefight continues in a blur of chaotic, jerky movements. Finally, as the last of the column passes behind them, Owen sees the line of militia rise up and move off to the northeast, obviously racing to intercept the column farther on.

O.S. Owen dimly hears Captain Balfour and other officers shouting for the company to fall back to the road and resume the march. When they get back to the road, he sees the bodies of a dozen soldiers lying in the road.

EXT - A HILL OVERLOOKING THE ROAD - DAY

Several hundred militia are lying down in the sparse woods on top of Brooks hill, which overlooks the Lexington Road on the south side of it. The men are about 75 yards from the road, waiting in ambush.

O.S. Sporadic gunfire is heard in the distance.

An OFFICER moves quickly among the militia at a crouch.

OFFICER

Keep your heads down, boys, until I give the order to fire. They'll be here in a few minutes. I want to let the head of the column get well past us before we jump em. So keep out of sight.

A lanky YOUTH waits nervously next to a grizzled SCOTSMAN. The youth takes a swallow from a flask, his hands shaking. The Scot placidly chews chewing tobacco and spits the juice from time to time.

The young man peers over the crest of the hill and sees the head of the British column come into view 150 yards away. A mounted officer in front holds up his sword to halt the column. Looking intently up the hill, he suddenly points his sword directly at the crouching youth and shouts some command. The first 50 men in the column fan out and begin charging up the hill.

YOUTH

Oh my God, here they come. Oh, Jesus,
they've seen us!

MILITIA OFFICER

All right, boys, let 'em have it! FIRE!

The whole line rises up to standing or kneeling positions and begins firing. The Scot next to the youth calmly stands up beside a small tree, aims carefully while steadying his rifle on the tree, and fires. The youth sees a charging redcoat drop. Kneeling, he quickly fires off a shot himself, the recoil knocking him back. As he is fumbling frantically with his pouch and ramrod to reload, the old Scot reloads smoothly and efficiently and gets off another shot.

YOUTH

I wish I could feel as calm as you
seem to be.

SCOTSMAN

(laconically reloading)

It's a trade, to be larnt, like any other.

The Scot coolly aims and fires again. Another charging redcoat drops. The militia officer runs by, yelling.

OFFICER

Fall back, boys. We'll regroup further down
the road.

The militia fall back in an orderly fashion, continuing to fire at the redcoats.

EXT - ON THE ROAD TO LEXINGTON - DAY

Owen and Reggie are near the rear of the column, hurrying along between a march and a trot, hunched over to keep a low profile. Minutemen fire sporadically at the column from behind rocks and trees, every five seconds or so.

REGGIE

We should be getting to that town where we
had the first fight this morning. I forget
the name.

OWEN

Lexington, I think.

REGGIE

I expect we'll get a lively welcome there.

OWEN

Well, I heard Colonel Smith tell Captain Balfour that we may be getting help from Lord Percy's brigade. Maybe they've gotten to Lexington by now.

REGGIE

I sure hope so. Jesus, I'm thirsty.

A soldier named BILLY in front of them is gasping as he struggles to keep up. He addresses OLLIE, the man next to him.

BILLY

Ollie, I don't think I can go any further. I've got to rest.

OLLIE

You do, Billy, and it's likely to be your last. You heard what they did to Harry Martin.

BILLY

No, what?

OLLIE

He was wounded back there at the bridge, and got left behind. When the militia found him, they scalped him, just like a bunch of bloody savages!

REGGIE

The hell you say! Where'd you hear that?

HARRY

From one of Colonel Maddison's men, who came across the bridge after we left. They found Harry's body in the road.

REGGIE
The bloody bastards.

The soldiers hurry on, Billy looking frightened and straining to keep up.

EXT - ON A HILL ABOVE THE ROAD APPROACHING LEXINGTON - DAY

On top of a steep, rocky hill now known as Parker's Revenge, 100 men are kneeling in wait. Some have blood-stained bandages covering wounds from the earlier fight on Lexington Green. Captain John Parker is walking back and forth in front of the men. O.S., sporadic gunfire is heard in the distance.

PARKER
All right, boys, pay back time is comin'. Now hold your fire until I give the word. I'm going to let the head of the column get to about that big oak tree down there, next to the road. Now boys, when the shootin' starts, keep your wits about you and shoot low. Aim at their knees. And remember this morning.

Henry Putnam is kneeling next to young Jonathan Jones, whose tear-streaked face now wears an expression of cold hatred. On the other side of Putnam is Samuel Dyer, whose face shows grim satisfaction that his moment of revenge is coming.

PUTNAM
Glad to have you with us, friend.

DYER
Glad to be here. I've waited a long time for this.

PARKER
Here they come boys. Now wait for my command.

The head of the British column comes into view. The British plod wearily up the hill, looking from side to side. Colonel Smith and Captain Brown are riding at the head of the column. Parker's company waits in silence until they get within 50 yards.

PARKER (continued)

Now, boys. Ready. Aim. FIRE.

A volley rips out. Colonel Smith is hit in the thigh. His horse rears up, and Smith tumbles to the ground. Five soldiers are hit, and the head of the column stops.

PARKER (continued)

Fire at will, men. Fire at will.

FROM THE BRITISH POV

As Captain Brown turns to give an order, his sword raised, he is hit in the cheek and falls. Major Pitcairn gallops up to the front, yelling to the men as the militia continue to pour down heavy fire on them.

PITCAIRN

You men, spread out and get down.
We've got to charge 'em.

Just then, Pitcairn's horse is hit and stumbles, throwing Pitcairn to the ground before the horse bolts off. Pitcairn struggles to his feet in pain, holding his arm, and continues directing the men.

PITCAIRN (continued)

Spread out, spread out, on both sides of the road. Two rows. Lieutenant, form a line with the next company and give us covering fire. Hold the rest of the column back there, until we clear out this lot.

The first 100 men spread out across the road in two rows, crouching down shoulder to shoulder.

PITCAIRN (continued)

All right, men. Quick now. On the double. Charge!

The weary redcoats, led by Major Pitcairn, surge up the hill. From behind them, a volley rakes the militia on the hill, felling half a dozen. As the line of redcoats nears the militia, many fire their muskets point blank.

The clash of the two forces produces a furious hand-to-hand combat. Dyer fires his musket, then swings it wildly as a club, consumed by fury, until he is bayoneted by a redcoat. Jonathan Jones, beside him, turns to run and is bayoneted in the back.

The rest of Parker's company falls back. The British stop at the top of the hill, exhausted, and watch the militia disappear.

EXT - APPROACHING LEXINGTON GREEN - DAY

Major Pitcairn, his broken arm in a sling, is marching at the head of the weary column. Colonel Maddison rides up to him from the rear. Two hundred yards ahead of them can be seen the Lexington Meeting house, next to Lexington Green. Militia are moving about it.

MADDISON

Major, where is Colonel Smith?

PITCAIRN

Wounded, Colonel. Back in one of the wagons.

MADDISON

We're losing control, Major. The men are becoming a panicked mob. Many are falling out from exhaustion.

PITCAIRN

There's bound to be a big force waiting for us up there at the green. You can see some of them from here. Maybe we should consider surrender before we lose our entire force.

MADDISON

I think you may be right. I see no hope of getting back To Boston at this point.

O.S. Just then, they hear the distant boom of a cannon.

As they look up, startled, they see a cannon ball crash into the Lexington Meeting House and come out the other side. Then they see militia running about and hear them shouting.

O.S. Another cannon shot is heard, and this too crashes into the meeting house.

Peering beyond the green, they see, a quarter mile away, redcoated figures on a ridge. The men around them begin to cheer. The cheer is picked up all along the column.

MADDISON

Lord Percy! Thank God!

The soldiers around him begin to run toward the ridge.

EXT - LORD PERCY'S LINE AT LEXINGTON - DAY

Part of Lord Percy's brigade is formed in line behind a low stone wall facing Lexington Green, a quarter of a mile away. Lord Percy and several officers are standing near his brigade's two field pieces. They stare in shock at the remnants of Smith's column streaming in disorder toward them. A line of militia, in a close, disciplined formation one hundred yards wide and four men deep can be seen following the panicked British soldiers.

One of the cannon near them fires. Two seconds later, the cannon ball blasts a gap in the militia's line, flattening three men and scattering the rest.

PERCY

My God, how can this have happened?

He continues to watch in disbelief as the first of Smith's troops reach his lines, flopping down in exhaustion and crying for water.

EXT - INSIDE LORD PERCY'S LINE AT LEXINGTON - DAY

Owen and Reggie and the rest of Smith's column are resting inside Percy's lines. Men are carrying buckets of water to the resting soldiers, who drink greedily from them. Officers are directing other men carrying wounded men into a house commandeered as a temporary hospital.

O.S. Occasional musket fire can be heard in the distance.

Some distance away, Percy is holding a council of war with Maddison, Pitcairn, Balfour and a dozen other officers.

PERCY

From what you say, Colonel Maddison, these farmers and shopkeepers have got more grit than I ever would have thought.

MADDISON

They're well led, too. Their attacks have been coordinated and their movements well disciplined.

PITCAIRN

Lord Percy, our men are utterly exhausted. Perhaps we should let them rest a few hours.

PERCY

No, major. In another few hours, we're likely to have twice as many of these people against us. We've got to keep moving if we want to get back to Boston. If we keep moving, they may not be able to reorganize their forces against us effectively.

MADDISON

But Boston is still fifteen miles away.

PERCY

The navy is waiting for us in Charleston, so once get into Charleston, we'll be covered by the ships guns and will be safe. Now here's my plan.

Lord Percy bends over a map on the ground.

EXT - ON THE ROAD TO CAMBRIDGE - DAY

Owen and Reggie are marching on the road with their company just ahead of the wagons and carriages carrying the wounded. A hundred yards to the left of their column they can see the left-flank British column marching through fields, looking out to their left.

O.S. Sporadic shots can be heard every two to four seconds, but no militia are visible.

REGGIE

Where are they, Owen? I can hear 'em, but I can't see 'em.

OWEN

Most of the shooting seems to be behind us. Hear those filed pieces with our rear guard? They should be keeping the militia at a distance.

REGGIE

I sure hope so.

O.S. Suddenly, they hear a dozen shots very close together.

They see a squad from the flanking column deploy rapidly toward the source of the firing and, a few moments later, discharge a crisp volley. There are no more shots for 10 seconds as the squad rejoins the flanking column.

REGGIE (continued)

Owen! Look there!

Reggie points to a patch of woods two hundred yards to their left front. A lone man with wild gray hair riding a white horse appears at the edge of the woods, dismounts and ties his horse in the shelter of the trees. The man assumes a prone firing position at the edge of the woods and fires. A soldier in the column is hit in the leg and cries out. Several soldiers shoot at the sniper as he quickly mounts his horse and rides off into the woods.

EXT - ARLINGTON MAIN STREET - DAY

Owen and Reggie are marching down the main street of Arlington village with their company. Lord Percy and Colonel Maddison are 50 yards ahead of them.

O.S. Musket fire can be heard in the distance. A SOLDIER in front of them is staggering. He addresses Sergeant Lamb in a croaking voice.

SOLDIER

Sergeant. I need water.

Suddenly, the column halts. A moment later, Lord Percy comes riding back along the column. When he gets to Owen's group, he addresses Captain Balfour, then rides on.

PERCY

Captain, we'll rest the column here for ten minutes while we get water from the wells in town and the flanking columns are able to catch up. Have a squad from each company go for water, and keep a sharp eye out for snipers in the houses.

BALFOUR

Yes sir. Sergeant Lamb, take a squad to get some water. I see a well over there. Sergeant Little, you and your men cover the widows of all the houses within view.

LAMB

Tolliver, Harris, Jones and Steele, collect canteens and follow me.

EXT - A WELL IN ARLINGTON - DAY

Owen is drawing up a bucket from a well in the back yard of a house. Lamb is standing guard, watching the upper story windows of the surrounding houses. Harris and Jones are filling canteens from another, half-full bucket on the ground. Steele is hurrying back to the column with a half dozen canteens.

Suddenly, a rifle shot cracks and a bullet rips a hole in Owens red jacket just below his arm pit. He looks up to see the white horse, standing calmly in full side view just forty yards away.

The white haired rider is standing behind the horse, the smoking rifle resting on the saddle and pointing straight at Owen.

As Sergeant Lamb wheels around to take aim, the rider vaults into the saddle and bolts away. Lamb fires, misses, swears and quickly reloads.

Steele reappears with more empty canteens. Another shot rings out from a second story window of the house, and Jones, hit in the hand, cries out.

LAMB

God damn! [Lowers his voice] Harris, Steele, fix bayonets and come with me. Jones, get back to the column and send some more men here. Tolliver, keep firing at that window until we get up there. Understand?

Owen nods grimly. He picks up his musket, and, as Lamb and the two others disappear around the house, he aims and fires at a rifle barrel that can be seen at the window.

As he is reloading, a MAN appears in the window looking down over the barrel of his rifle.

O.S., a crash is heard behind the man, a woman screams.

A MAN'S VOICE O.S.
WE SURRENDER!

O.S. A shot fires, the woman screams again, the voice croaks: For God's sakes! More screaming, suddenly stifled, then silence.

Owen looks at his hands, which are trembling. Ten seconds later, Lamb and the others appears, looking very grim. Their bayonets are bloody. Two other soldiers from the column arrive.

LAMB

Hurry up and finish filling the
goddamned canteens, and let's get
out of this place.

EXT - ON THE ROAD TO CHARLESTON - LATE AFTERNOON

A MONTAGE showing:

The column is wearily trudging back to Charleston in the
lengthening shadows of the afternoon. O.S. sporadic shots
are heard.

A squad deploys wearily to chase away a group of attackers.

The man on the white horse appears in the distance,
dismounts, fires and rides off.

Billy falls wearily to his knees; Ollie tries to pull him
up, is unable to and leaves him.

The old Scot calmly aims his rifle against a tree and fires
at the column. The youth does the same.

The man on the white horse appears again, firing from his
saddle.

A squad deploys to fire at him, but he rides off before
they can get a shot off.

EXT - HARVARD SQUARE, CAMBRIDGE - DUSK

Balfour's two companies, about 60 men, march warily into
Harvard Square, a wide crossroads with the Harvard yard and
buildings on the northeast quadrant. The column turns left
on Massachusetts Avenue, proceeding by buildings and
houses.

Students jeer from windows. Halfway down a side street,
five militia behind a barricade open fire on the column.
No hits.

BALFOUR

Sgt. Lamb! Take your squad and disperse them.

Sgt Lamb, kneeling behind the corner of a house, assembles Owen, Harris and six others and checks their guns. Owen has to load.

SGT LAMB

When I say now, we rush em. Advance five paces on the double, kneel and fire on my command. Then rush them with the bayonet.

The men carry out the command. One militia man falls, the rest scatter. Reggie bayonets the wounded man. The squad returns to the column, Owen lagging behind the rest.

Suddenly, Owen stops, looks down at his leg, and sees a small patch of red on the side of his thigh, expanding. He takes a step and his leg buckles.

OWEN

Reg. REGGIE.

No one comes. O.S. Shots are heard and Owen sees the column hurrying by on the main road.

EXT - OUTSIDE CHARLESTON - EARLY EVENING

COLONEL THOMAS PICKERING, colonel of the Marblehead and Salem militia, is standing in a field with several of his officers, including Captain Felt of the Salem militia. The last light of the setting sun can be seen in the western sky. One of them holds an upright staff from which is hanging a lantern illuminating their faces and those of the several hundred militia ranged behind them.

They are watching Percy's column trudging across Charleston neck into Charleston, illuminated by the rising moon and the lights from a few houses by the road.

Two MEN carrying rifles run up to the colonel, excited and out of breath.

FIRST MAN

Is this the Marblehead militia?

PICKERING

Yes it is, Marblehead and Salem.
I'm Colonel Pickering, colonel of
The regiment. Who are you?

FIRST MAN

Thank God you've arrived! We're from
Colonel Barrett's regiment, the First
Middlesex. Colonel, you've got to
attack those redcoats right now, before
they get into Charleston and get clean
away!

PICKERING

The orders I received from General
Heath four hours ago were to proceed to
this point and wait, which we've been
doing for an hour. I received no
orders to attack the King's troops. My
God, man! That would be war!

SECOND MAN

Colonel, we've been warring with those
people all day long. Ever since they
butchered half the Lexington militia in
cold blood first thing this morning.

O.S. An angry muttering from the assembled militia greets
this statement. Captain Felt addresses Pickering.

FELT

Colonel, if he's right - and he's got
no reason to lie that I can see - we
ought to do what he says and attack
those troops right now, 'cause we'll
surely be facing 'em again in the days
ahead.

Pickering, obviously conflicted, wrestles with the issue a
moment before reaching a decision.

PICKERING

No, I'm not willing to take so grave a
step on the basis of hearsay. I'm not
going to fire on our own soldiers
without a direct written order from
General Heath.

The two Middlesex men shake their heads in disgust.

EXT - BOSTON STREET - NIGHT

The column trudges through town in the rain. Doors and windows are shuttered. One is cracked, a woman peeks through, shuts it.

Patience walks up and down the column.

PATIENCE

Corporal Tolliver. Has anyone seen
Corporal Tolliver?

She asks Reggie, who looks at her, exhausted.

REGGIE

So you're the one. I saw him last in
the town just across the river.
Cambridge, I think. There was a little
fight, and I haven't seen him since.

PATIENCE

Where in the town?

REGGIE

I don't know. We'd gone through the
middle of the town, I think. It warn't
far from the college.

Patience rushes off.

EXT - BOSTON NECK - NIGHT

Patience is hurrying along the road across Boston Neck in the rain, but is stopped by two British SENTRIES.

FIRST SENTRY

Sorry miss, you'll have to go back.

PATIENCE

What? Why?

SENTRY

No one can leave the town tonight.
Orders of General Gage.

In disgust and frustration, Patience turns around and hurries off.

EXT - BACK BAY - NIGHT

Patience finds a rowboat and rows off.

EXT - CAMBRIDGE - NIGHT

Patience hurries along Mass Ave searching for Owen. Students are walking about, singing Yankee Doodle and talking excitedly, some carrying torches. She turns down a side street and finds Owen, lying by the side of a house, half hidden by a barrel.

PATIENCE

Owen!

She runs to him, taking his head in her lap. He opens his eyes slightly and groans, but shows no consciousness. She sees his leg, rips a strip from her dress and bandages the leg. Then she looks about, drags him to a more concealed position, and runs off.

EXT - PATIENCE'S UNCLE'S HOUSE - NIGHT

Patience bangs on her UNCLE URIAH'S door. He answers.

PATIENCE

Uncle Uriah! I need your horse and wagon.

URIAH

Patience! What are you doing here?
It's the middle of the night.

PATIENCE

(breathless)

A man is wounded. Near Harvard
Square. He'll die if we don't hurry.

URIAH

A man? What man?

PATIENCE

Hurry, uncle, please.

Patience's AUNT ELIZABETH appears.

ELIZABETH

Patience! What on earth?

URIAH

A man's been wounded, Elizabeth. I'm going with Patience to fetch him. Get a bed ready and some clean water and bandages.

Uriah and Patience go out to the barn.

EXT - CAMBRIDGE - NIGHT

The wagon pulls into the side street from Mass Ave. Singing and cheering can be heard and torches seen moving on Mass Ave. Patience jumps out, runs to a dark corner.

PATIENCE

Here, Uncle Uriah!

Uriah brings the wagon over. He gets down and looks.

URIAH

A redcoat!

PATIENCE

Uncle, please, he's dying. We can't let him die. We can't.

Uriah and Patience carefully lift Owen into the wagon.

INT - BEDROOM IN UNCLE'S HOUSE - MORNING

Next morning. Patience and her aunt and uncle are standing by Owen's bed. He is asleep, breathing heavily.

URIAH

He's lost a lot of blood. The bullet's still in his leg. I don't know whether it hit the bone or not.

ELIZABETH

But what shall we do with him? We should tell someone on the committee. If people discover we've been harboring a British soldier in secret, they'll burn our house down. Just like they did to Mr. Brattle's house.

URIAH

She's right, you know.

PATIENCE

But Uncle Uriah, they might kill him, the way everyone is stirred up now.

URIAH

Well, I'd like to think our neighbors are more Christian than that. But you're right, we can't be sure, the way people are feeling right now. Some of those liberty boys might try to drag him off to jail, even the way he is.

ELIZABETH

But we have to protect ourselves, too, Uriah.

URIAH

Well, we also have a Christian duty to care even for our enemies. But I may have a word with Parson Matthews, on the committee, so we can't be accused of harboring a redcoat in secret. He's a sensible man. Don't you speak of this to anyone else, Elizabeth.

Patience takes Owen's hand and looks down at him.

PATIENCE

Thank you, Uncle.

URIAH

And you need to tell your father of this. It will not do for him to hear of it first from me.

PATIENCE

I know.

INT - THE GAGES' PARLOR - DUSK

Gage, looking very downcast and weary, enters the parlor. Margaret, the only occupant, rises to greet him.

MARGARET

Well?

GAGE

A disaster. A massacre. More than a hundred dead and several hundred more wounded and missing.

MARGARET

Oh, my dear. My poor dear husband.

She embraces him sympathetically. Gage does not return the embrace, but stands with his arms down, looking grim and defeated. After a moment, she disengages, stands back, and looks at him.

GAGE

Don't speak of your poor husband. Think instead about those poor brave boys, some barely old enough to shave, shot down, bleeding to death in the rain. Ambushed. Murdered. Betrayed.

Margaret makes no response, but tears begin to well in her eyes.

GAGE (continued)

Yes, betrayed. They knew of our plan in advance. They were waiting for us.

Margaret still makes no response; a tear runs down her cheek.

GAGE (continued)

I won't speak what is in my mind, Margaret. It would do neither of us any good. In any event, I've decided the situation here has become too dangerous for you to remain. I'm sending you home to England on the next ship. The Charming Nancy sails in three weeks. After yesterday, I don't expect I'll be remaining here much longer myself.

Margaret expels a deep sigh and dabs her eyes with her sleeve.

INT - THE HAMMOND HOUSE - NIGHT

LEMUEL HAMMOND, Patience's father, is standing in the middle of the main room of the house in front of the seated Patience. Hands on this hips, Lemuel is in a rage. Mrs. Hammond, NED and Maggie are present.

LEMUEL

This is beyond belief! Are you telling me my own daughter has been carrying on with one of those bloody MURDERERS?

PATIENCE

He's not a murderer.

LEMUEL

Not a murderer? You tell that to the wives and mothers of the men shot down in cold blood at Lexington yesterday morning. And you, carrying on with this redcoat right under our noses. How is this possible? Sarah? Maggie? Ned? Did you know anything of this?

Mrs. Hammond and Maggie shake their heads.

NED

Do you think I would not have told you, Father, if I'd known she was carrying on with a bloody lobsterback?

PATIENCE

He saved my life, Father, last September, when the tide was coming in and I was stuck out in the flats.

LEMUEL

What? You never told us of this.

PATIENCE

I knew you wouldn't like it.

LEMUEL

You're damned right I wouldn't like it. And yet knowing I would never permit it, you've been carrying on with him in secret ever since. I certainly hope you're not carrying his child!

MRS HAMMOND

Lemuel!

Patience stands up, furious, and slaps her father hard in the face. Lemuel bellows and raises his hand to strike her. Mrs. Hammond steps quickly between them and pushes her husband back.

MRS. HAMMOND

Lemuel, get a hold of yourself.

LEMUEL

She struck me, the shameless wench.

MRS. HAMMOND

She was amply provoked. You had no cause to insult her so.

LEMUEL

Well, she was very wrong to deceive us in this way. Very wrong. And she'll not do so again, I'll make sure of that. Tomorrow, I shall take you to your Aunt Margaret's in Marblehead, where you shall stay until this man is dead or out of this colony. If word gets about that you've been carrying on with a British soldier, it would be not only shameful but dangerous.

MRS. HAMMOND

But the British have closed the city,
Lemuel. They're not letting anyone
leave.

LEMUEL

What! They can't do that.

MRS. HAMMOND

They have.

LEMUEL

Well, until I can take you to Margaret's,
you are not to leave this house alone. Is
that understood?

MRS. HAMMOND

What about her work for Mrs. Warren? It's
not much, but these days we need every
penny. And it won't hurt to keep the good
will of the Warrens in these times.

LEMUEL

Well, she can keep doing that. But one of
you must walk her there and go for her when
it's time to return.

INT - BEDROOM - DAY

Owen is lying on his back staring up at the ceiling. His
face is ashen. The door opens and Uriah comes in. Owen
follows him with his eyes.

URIAH

I'm Patience's uncle, Uriah Hammond.

Owen nods his head slightly.

URIAH (continued)

My wife says you were able to take a
little soup today.

Owen nods again, but winces in pain.

URIAH (continued)

Aye, she said you were in considerable pain. I think the bullet may have hit the bone. To tell you the truth, young man, I'm not sure what to do with you. Any other time, I'd go right away for a doctor. But the people have been collecting the dead and wounded from here to Concord for the past two days. If word should get out that you're here -- well, it could get ugly for all of us. So for the time being, I don't propose to tell anyone about you.

Owen nods

URIAH (continued)

Now Patience, she says you two wish to wed.

Owen nods again.

URIAH (continued)

Well, she does seem set on you, and she can be stubborn when her mind's set on something, just like her mother. But you may as well know, her father will never allow her to marry a redcoat.

Owen looks at the ceiling.

URIAH (continued)

Fact is, though, there's no need for you to go back to being a redcoat. Your people almost certainly think you're dead. It'd be easy enough, in this country, for you to stay that way as far as they're concerned.

Owen looks back at him, then shakes his head slightly.

OWEN

(croaks)

Oath.

URIAH

What's that you say?

OWEN

(whispering)

I took an oath. I won't break it.

URIAH

Well, young man. You think about it. We'll see how you feel when you get stronger. And if you die, it's a moot point, as the lawyers say.

Owen nods grimly.

INT -A WEEK LATER - BEDROOM - DAY

Owen, dressed in a long night shirt, is hobbling back to his bed on two crutches, his wounded leg strapped to a crude splint. Uriah and Elizabeth help him carefully into the bed as Owen gasps in great pain.

URIAH

I don't like the look of that wound. It's still oozing, and you have a fever to boot. I think it's time to go for a doctor.

OWEN

No, Mr. Bunce. You and Mrs. Bunce have been too kind to me already. I think it's time for me to go back to my company. The surgeons there can look at my leg.

URIAH

You've thought about what I said, then?

OWEN

I have, sir, and my mind is the same. I'm no deserter. I love your niece, but if I survive this wound, I'll have to live with myself too, won't I?

URIAH

I guess you will. I'll take you back tonight, then, in the wagon. General Gage is letting people come and go again. And I need to take some supplies to Sarah and Lemuel.

ELIZABETH

But Uriah. What will people say if they find out we sent a redcoat back to be fighting against our friends and kin again?

URIAH

This one won't be fighting any time soon, if he ever does. If anyone does find out, I can truthfully say I figured he'd only be a burden to General Gage and that I was saving our side the cost of feeding him.

INT - BRITISH HEADQUARTERS - NIGHT

A LIEUTENANT is seated at a desk writing a report by candlelight. The door opens and Owen enters, moving painfully on crutches. Hanson and another soldier assist on either side.

LIEUTENANT

My word! What the devil is this?

Just then, General Gage enters from his office.

GAGE

What on earth?

OWEN

Corporal Owen Tolliver, sir, reporting for duty.

HANSON

A man from Cambridge brought him back in a wagon, General Gage. He was badly wounded in the fight there last week. Evidently, they took care of him until he insisted on being brought back.

GAGE

This is remarkable. Most remarkable. What's your regiment, Corporal?

OWEN

The Fourth Foot, General. Captain Balfour's company.

GAGE

The King's Own. I might have known. Well, Corporal Tolliver, all I can say is I wish I had more soldiers like you. You men get Corporal Tolliver to the infirmary at once, and roust out Dr. Blake to tend to him immediately.

EXT - A BOSTON STREET - DAY

Patience and her sister Maggie are walking to Mrs. WARREN'S.

PATIENCE

Father seemed very cross this morning

MAGGIE

Yes, and I think I know why. You know, Uncle Uriah was here last night.

PATIENCE

No! To our house?

MAGGIE

Yes. He brought some potatoes and apples and firewood, in his wagon.

PATIENCE

No! I never woke up. Did you talk to him?

MAGGIE

No, I didn't get up. But I heard him talking to Father.

PATIENCE

Did you hear what they said?

MAGGIE

They talked about your soldier. Uncle Uriah brought him back to the barracks last night. He said the young man insisted. That he wouldn't desert.

PATIENCE

Oh, dear God! Did he say how he was?

MAGGIE

He said the wound is bad. Uncle Uriah thinks he may not live.

PATIENCE

Oh, dear God.

MAGGIE

Then Father started talking about sending you to Aunt Margaret's, but Mother said it wouldn't be right to burden them with another mouth to feed, and what's the point, if the boy's not likely to live anyway.

PATIENCE

Oh Maggie, what am I going to do?

The girl's arrive at Mrs. Warren's house and embrace. Patience is very upset. Maggie turns back and Patience tries to compose herself before opening the door.

INT - THE WARREN'S FRONT ROOM - DAY

Patience enters the front room of the Warren house. The only person in the room is ABIGAIL JONES, who is Lady Gage's maid. Abigail looks very unhappy.

PATIENCE

Abigail! What are you doing here?
Is this your day off?

ABIGAIL

No.

PATIENCE

Where's Mrs. Warren?

Abigail nods toward a closed door.

PATIENCE (continued)

Where's your mistress?

Abigail nods toward the same door. Patience raises her eyebrows in surprise.

PATIENCE (continued)

Abigail, is anything the matter? You look upset.

ABIGAIL

Oh Patience. I have to go to England in two weeks, with my mistress. I may never see my family or friends ever again.

PATIENCE

Well, why must you go? Can't you say no?

ABIGAIL

I could. But I have no other work, and my father has too many mouths to feed as it is. And now it looks like there'll be a war. And Lady Gage is very kind, and she says she needs me. She doesn't want to go either, but her husband says she must.

Just then, the closed door opens and Mrs. Warren and Lady Gage emerge, arm in arm, their heads together. Lady Gage has tears on her cheeks, and Mrs. Warren looks at her sympathetically. The two women embrace. Lady Gage dries her tears with a handkerchief and starts toward the front door.

MRS WARREN

Perhaps it would be best if you went out the back door.

LADY GAGE

Yes, I suppose so. Come Abigail.

The two women and Abigail go back through the door toward the rear of the house. Patience is left alone looking very astonished.

INT - INFIRMARY - DAY

Owen is lying on a bed in a crowded ward with 30 beds. Several doctors and attendants are attending other patients. Owen, weak and feverish, stares up at the ceiling. An attendant shows Reggie Harris in.

REGGIE

Owen!

OWEN

Hello, Reggie.

Reggie looks for a chair, and, seeing none, kneels on one knee in the narrow space between Owen's bed and the next.

REGGIE

Owen, I came twice before, but they said you were sleeping both times. Say, it's good to see you. How are you feeling?

OWEN

My leg hurts and I'm burning up with fever. Other than that, I guess I can't complain.

REGGIE

Can I get you anything?

OWEN

I'd be obliged for some water.

Reggie gets up and returns with a mug of water, which he helps Owen drink.

OWEN (continued)

Thanks, Reg. When I came here, I don't know when it was, three or four days ago, the surgeon cut the bullet out of my leg. He thinks it broke the bone. He's got it splinted up tight, but it hurts like the very devil. But there's lads here a lot worse. At least I've got my legs. So far, anyway.

REGGIE

You'll be up and about in no time, Owen.

OWEN

Not likely, but thanks anyway, Reggie. So, what's happening outside? Has there been any more fighting?

REGGIE

Not yet. But there's been a lot of drilling. Makes some of us think General Gage is planning to break out. Maybe attack the main militia force, which I hear is over in Charleston. The way things are now, we've got to either break out or pull out. I heard a navy bloke say Admiral Graves wants to level Charleston with his ships' guns, but General Gage won't let him.

OWEN

What about the company? How many did we lose?

REGGIE

Four killed. Harry Martin, Billy Harris, Tom Benner and Jonas Simpson. Seven wounded, including you. The Royal Welsh Fusiliers got hit the worst, defending the rear guard on the way back from Lexington, where most of the fighting was.

OWEN

Did you know it was Patience who found me and saved my life? At least that's what her uncle told me. I never saw her.

REGGIE

I thought it might be. I was the one who told her where we last saw you?

OWEN

What? When?

REGGIE

When we got back to Boston that night. She was going up and down the line asking if anyone knew you. That girl has some grit, getting back over to Cambridge in the rain and all and managing to find you in the dark.

OWEN

I've got to get word to her, Reggie. Sergeant Lamb told me this morning that they're sending me and the other seriously wounded back to England next week. Can you try to get word to her, Reg? Tell her I have to leave, but I'll be back for her as soon as I can. Tell her if I live, I'll be back.

REGGIE

I'll try, Owen. Do you know where she lives?

OWEN

I don't know the house. Her father's name is Hammond. He has a ship chandler's shop in the town.

REGGIE

I'll find it.

OWEN

Thanks, Reggie.

EXT - HAMMOND HOUSE - DAY

Reggie knocks at the front door of the Hammond house. Lemuel Hammond opens it.

LEMUEL

What do you want?

REGGIE

Is Mistress Patience Hammond in?

LEMUEL

What business do you have with her?

REGGIE

I wish to speak with her?

LEMUEL

She's not here. She's gone to Portsmouth. And if she were here, she'd have no business with the likes of you.

Lemuel shuts the door in Reggie's face. As Reggie walks away, Patience looks out at him from an upstairs window.

EXT - A BOSTON STREET - DAY

As Reggie walks along the street, Maggie overtakes him.

MAGGIE
(covertly)
Sir, a word with you.

Maggie leads Reggie into an alley, looking about nervously.

MAGGIE (continued)
I'm Patience's sister. What did you
want to say to her?

REGGIE
I wished to bring her word from my
friend, Owen Tolliver. He's being
shipped back to England day after
tomorrow. He wants her to know he'll
be back, and that she must believe him.
He'll be back as soon as he can.

MAGGIE
Tell him she'll try to see him before
he leaves. If she can.

REGGIE
But your father said she's in Portsmouth.

Maggie shakes her head curtly and hurries off.

BOSTON DOCKSIDE - DAY

A ship is moored to the dockside. Wounded men are being carried or assisted up the gangplank. Owen is lying on the dockside with scores of other wounded waiting his term. Reggie is squatting beside him.

OWEN
I guess she couldn't get away.

REGGIE

I guess not, Owen.

OWEN

Give her this letter, Reggie,
if you can.

REGGIE

I will, Owen.

Two soldiers come over to Owen with a stretcher. Reggie helps them lift him onto it. Owen groans with pain.

OWEN

You take care of yourself, Reggie,
till I get back.

REGGIE

I will, Owen. You take care too.

EXT - ON THE DECK OF THE SHIP - DAY

The ship is sailing in Boston Harbor on a gentle breeze, Boston receding a mile in the distance. The camera pans over the wounded on the main deck. Owen is sitting up, propped against a mast, looking gloomily at the receding shore.

Behind and above him on the poop deck, Lady Gage is leaning on the rail, also looking at the shore. The ship's captain, CAPTAIN MORSE, stands next to her.

MORSE

Well, Lady Gage, it's a bad state of affairs back there, very bad. I dare say you're relieved to be out of it.

LADY GAGE

On the contrary, Captain Morse. I'm very sad to be leaving. Boston is my home, and I shall miss my husband, although I know I would be a source of anxiety to him in these difficult times.

MORSE

I dare say. But at least you have your daughter with you.

LADY GAGE

My daughter? Oh no, that's just my maid, Abigail. Now she was very upset to be leaving. She's from Boston, you see, a simple girl who's never been away from home. Practically had a fit.

MORSE

Really?

LADY GAGE

Oh yes. Weeping and wailing, with this long sad story about a sweetheart, and how cruel it would be to separate true lovers, and all that sort of thing.

MORSE

But you were unmoved, I take it.

LADY GAGE

Well of course. Romance is all well and good in its place, but a good lady's maid is irreplaceable.

They both turn to look at Abigail, who is on the other side of the ship on the deck below them looking out to sea. Lady Gage smiles to herself as Abigail turns and is revealed to be Patience. Owen is still brooding as Patience approaches him from behind.

FADE OUT

EPILOGUE

On June 17, 1775, a week after the departure of the *Charming Nancy*, General Gage's troops attacked the American forces in Charleston. In the ensuing Battle of Bunker Hill, the British were repulsed with heavy losses.

Dr. Joseph Warren, the American leader who was later elected President of the Massachusetts Provincial Congress, joined the fight at Bunker Hill as a private soldier and was killed.

Major John Pitcairn, the British officer who fought bravely on the march back from Concord, was also killed at Bunker Hill.

Captain John Parker of the Lexington militia was too ill to join his men at Bunker Hill and died of tuberculosis three months later.

Dr. Benjamin Church continued to spy for General Gage until the summer of 1775, when one of his letters was intercepted. He was convicted but permitted to leave the country and disappeared.

Colonel Francis Smith, commander of the British expedition to Concord, was later promoted to brigadier and then to major general.

Lord Hugh Percy was promoted to lieutenant general but, disgusted with the British conduct of the war, resigned his command in 1777 and returned to England, where he became Duke of Northumberland and one of the richest men in England.

General Thomas Gage was recalled to England in October 1775. He remained estranged from his wife and died in 1787.

Margaret Gage returned to England after a terrible voyage on the overcrowded, storm-beset *Charming Nancy*. Historians are divided on whether she was an informant for the Americans, as her husband believed.

