



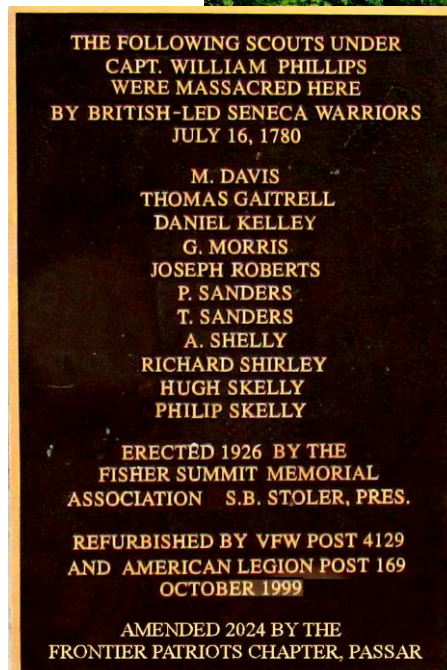
This is NewsLetter Issue No. Two ~ For the year 2025

Phillips' Rangers Massacre Monument Re-Dedication

On the beautiful spring day of 19 April 2025 (the 250th Anniversary of the Battles of Lexington and Concord in 1775, and the "Shot Heard 'Round The World"), the re-dedication of the Phillips' Rangers Massacre Monument was held. The monument was re-dedicated since the bronze plaque, containing additional information, was replaced.

The name of Joseph Roberts was added to the plaque installed in 1999 by the local VFW. The given names of five other massacred Patriots were spelled out rather than having just the initial letter of those names. Also even though the name of the leader of the Bedford County Militia company was presented simply as "Captain Phillips" on the 1999 plaque, on the new one his

whole name of "Captain William Phillips" was



given. And lastly, the 1999 plaque noted that the Bedford County Militiamen were massacred by "Indians". The new plaque more accurately states that the attackers were "British-led Seneca warriors".

Those of you who were unable to attend the event missed a very nice ceremony. Matt Evans played three hymns on the bagpipes to

start the ceremony. Then three members of the Cumberland County Militia re-enactors presented the flag and stood at attention throughout the

arms and ammunition at Concord. [See article below] I then followed that with an historical summary of the incident in which British

Lieutenant John Dochstedder, with a platoon (5 to 20) British troops and about sixty Seneca warriors laid siege to the cabin of Frederick Heater where the Bedford County men had sought refuge from the evening rain.



ceremony. I greeted everyone and led them in the Pledge of Allegiance. The Reverend Rusty Chamberlain spoke of the sacrifice made by the Patriots who were massacred and then he offered a prayer.

Before providing a narrative of the 16 July 1780 incident, I spoke of the four hours on the 19th of April 1775 when farmers and townsmen gathered at Lexington Common to try to stop the British regulars from their intended capture of the rebels'

remarks. John Crider gave remarks on behalf of the Blair County Historical Society. Samantha Snowberger gave remarks on behalf of the Adam Holliday Chapter, DAR. I asked if anyone in the audience wished to speak, and Kurt Winter, current President of the Pennsylvania Society, SAR commented on the event.

To close out the ceremony, Matt Evans played a medley of patriotic songs on the bagpipes. The Cumberland County Militia then fired a musketry salute.



Photos courtesy William Roy Mock. Photo Top Left, from left: Lonnie Smith Jr, John Crider, Samantha Snowberger, Debra Topinka, Larry Smith, W. Matt Evans. Photo Top Right: Kurt Winter. Photo Bottom: Family of recently approved Frontier Patriots Chapter Compatriot, David Cauffield (far left), David's brother and his family and their mother (all descendants of Patriot Joseph Roberts) and Larry D. Smith



The Shot Heard 'Round The World

Just before dawn of the 19th of April, 1775, at some time between four o'clock and four-thirty, drums beat the call in the village of Lexington. Between fifty and seventy men hurried to Lexington Common and formed a line. Major John Pitcairn also heard that call to arms. Pitcairn, second in command to Lieutenant Colonel Francis Smith, had been chosen to lead the British column by General Gage. At the sound of the drum roll Pitcairn was just reaching the outskirts of the town on its south side. He halted his column momentarily for them to load their muskets. He then doubled the ranks and ordered them forward at double time pace. As the British troops came round both sides of the church toward the common, they saw before them two ragged lines of the militia. They were not actually blocking the road to Concord, but their presence posed a threat nonetheless.

Major Pitcairn rode ahead of his troops and called out to the Massachusetts Bay militiamen to lay down their firearms and vacate the ground. Ebenezer Munroe, one of the militiamen who stood in the line on Lexington Common, noted that:

"The British troops came up directly in our front. The commanding officer advanced within a few rods of us and exclaimed, 'Disperse, you damned rebels! You dogs, run! Rush on, my boys.'"

Colonel Francis Smith, the mission's top commander, submitted a different story about the opening fight of the war. His version stated that:

"Our troops advanced toward them, without any intention of injuring them, further than to inquire the reason of their being thus assembled, and if not satisfactory, to have secured their arms; but they in confusion went off, principally to the left only one of them fired

before he went off, and three or four more jumped over a wall and fired from behind it among the soldiers; on which the troops returned it..."

The various eyewitness reports disagree on the actual circumstances by which the first shot was fired and to whom that "shot heard 'round the world" could be attributed. Both, Major Pitcairn and Captain John Parker, who commanded the militia, had ordered their respective troops not to fire unless to return fire directed at them. Captain Parker reportedly told his men:

"Don't fire unless fired upon! But if they want war, let it begin here."

Depositions given by various of the patriots who stood on the common that morning stated that a member of the militia near the edge of the green had attempted to fire his musket at one of Pitcairn's subalterns, but the powder flashed in the pan. It is believed that the first shot was fired from the vicinity of the Buckman Tavern, or from behind the wall that ran beside that property. The patriots' statements noted that as soon as that shot split the tension hanging in the air the British troops were given the order to open fire. American witnesses standing near the center of the militia line attested that they heard the British commander, Pitcairn, shout to his troops "fire, fire damn you fire". The British reports would claim that no such order was given by the major; rather, the British troops responded spontaneously to that initial shot and began firing without orders.

Following the first barrage of British musket fire, Pitcairn's troops continued to discharge their muskets at the colonial militiamen. The militiamen, meanwhile, dispersed and fled for cover. Eight of them lay dead on the field and ten were wounded, including Captain Parker who had been shot in

the leg. The British troops charged after the retreating militiamen, all the while shouting so loudly that orders, if they had been given, could not be heard.

According to one member of Parker's militia none of the Americans had discharged their muskets as they faced the oncoming British troops. The British did suffer one casualty, a slight wound, the particulars of which were corroborated by a deposition made by Corporal John Munroe. Munroe stated that:

"After the first fire of the regulars, I thought, and so stated to Ebenezer Munroe ...who stood next to me on the left, that they had fired nothing but powder; but on the second firing, Munroe stated they had fired something more than powder, for he had received a wound in his arm; and now, said he, to use his own words, 'I'll give them the guts of my gun.' We then both took aim at the main body of British troops the smoke

preventing our seeing anything but the heads of some of their horses and discharged our pieces."

Colonel Smith appeared on the scene soon after the engagement. He was evidently appalled at the sight of the dead colonials and the disorder of his own troops. He directed a drummer to beat out a tattoo for his men to lay down their arms and then he assisted Major Pitcairn in restoring order among their troops. After the British troops were reformed into columns Colonel Smith allowed them to fire a traditional victory volley and then give three cheers. Then, to the tune of fife and drum, they marched off toward Concord. The time was nearly eight o'clock in the morning.

A war was indeed started there are on the town common of Lexington, Massachusetts, a war that would cost many lives on this continent, upon the oceans and on foreign lands halfway around the world.



The next meeting of the
Frontier Patriots Chapter
of the Sons of the American Revolution
will be held at Marzoni's restaurant
at 164 Patchway Rd, Duncansville, PA
on Saturday, 14 June 2025
starting at 12 Noon.

I am very happy to announce that Frontier Patriots Chapter Compatriot John Betting was able to obtain, for our Chapter, a sapling grown from the last standing Liberty Tree. There were numerous trees each labeled as 'Liberty Tree' throughout the Colonies in the 1770's, but the one at Annapolis, Maryland was the last one standing. Unfortunately, in 1999, when Hurricane Floyd struck the east coast of the United States, the Liberty Tree standing on the campus of St. John's College at Annapolis, Maryland was fatally damaged. Saplings were grown from cuttings and seeds taken from the original tree. And our Chapter received one to plant at the Engagement of Frankstown memorial.

For those of you that receive this newsletter by US mail, if you have an email address, we would appreciate you informing us of it to use for future newsletters. Printing and mailing these newsletters is not that expensive, but it is time consuming. Please send to our Secretary Larry Smith at schmitt@motherbedford.com

Frontier Patriots Chapter website: <https://frontierpatriots.com>