



A Patriot Story

Artemas Howe

Military Service / Captain in the Lexington Alarm
Residence: MA / NY / VT
Born: 23 Mar 1734 / Lancaster, Worcester Co, MA
Died: circa 1798 / Brattleboro, Windham Co, VT
DAR Ancestor #: A058220

Artemas Howe participated in the French and Indian Wars prior to being called upon to fight during the Lexington Alarm on April 19, 1775. Captain Howe commanded a company of Minute Men during what many consider to be the first battle of the American Revolution. The Lexington-Concord Alarm has sometimes been referred to as “the shot heard round the world” from a quote by Ralph Waldo Emerson.

The Lexington Alarm is well documented in many accounts. On the night of April 18, 1775, roughly 700 British Regulars were ordered to march from Boston, with the intent of destroying Colonial stockpiles of gunpowder and cannons. It was also their orders to capture two rebel leaders of the Sons of Liberty, John Hancock and Samuel Adams, who were staying underground in Lexington after being warned by Paul Revere and William Dawes that the British were coming to arrest them.

The next day, April 19, 1775, seventy-seven Lexington militia men began the confrontation against the British Regulars. Several soldiers were killed before the British moved on to Concord. Adams and Hancock left their hiding places in Lexington and traveled roughly 5 miles to Woburn until the British Redcoats went back to Boston.

Artemas was 41 years old at the time of the Lexington Alarm. Several of his sons could likely have also fought during the Revolutionary War.

Artemas married Abigail Brooks in 1754. She was born in 1736 in Massachusetts Bay, British Colonial America. After the Colonials won their Independence from British rule, Artemas Howe, his wife, Abigail, and their children moved from Bolton, Massachusetts, to Westford, New York, where it's believed he built and operated the first gristmill in the area.

They had 13 children, but several died in infancy. At some point, the family moved to Brattleboro, Vermont, where both died and were buried.

Life in Massachusetts Colony in the early 1770's was not easy, but the 1600's was considerably more difficult. Born around 1660, Artemas' great-grandparents were some of the first settlers in Lancaster, Massachusetts, where Artemas was born. Life was about to get deadly for his ancestors. It appears that Artemas' great-grandmother, Elizabeth (Howe) Kerley, was killed sometime during King Philip's War (1675-1678). Elizabeth's three sons, mother, and two brothers were all killed in Lancaster on February 10, 1676, by Indians in a massacre raid. Elizabeth's sister and other family members were taken captive during the Indian raid in 1676.

Artemas Howe came from a long line of Colonists who sought a better life. He joined and led family members and friends in the Lexington Alarm which led to the American Revolutionary War, and ultimately independence.

Source(s): Massachusetts, Revolutionary War, Index Muster Roll cards; What was the "Shot Heard Round the World"?, Elizabeth Nix, History Channel; The Lexington Alarm, John H. Scheide, (taken from Americanantiquarian.org); Massachusetts Revolutionary War index; Vital records of Bolton, Massachusetts (Worcester, Massachusetts.: Franklin P. Rice, 1910); Familypedia.wikia.org; kerleyconnections/kerleys-1600-s-massachusetts

