

Standard Operating Procedures: STORYTELLER’s Annex

Version 3.0

# Overview

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## Foreword

This volume is intended for Storytellers, both those starting down the road as apprentices as well as fully qualified volunteers who need a reference guide.

It is primarily oriented at telling compelling oral histories that connect students to our shared heritage.

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## Edition Information

### Revision Notes

This annex is new for Edition 3.0.

### Acknowledgments

Many individuals contributed to this manual, and not all can be individually named. We are especially appreciative of the following key contributors:

* Heather Seidler, who compiled the initial history materials

Any errors are those of the editor (i.e. myself).

### Revisions and Changes

This manual will be revised on a periodic basis. Please identify changes to this volume to the Executive Officer for History.

## SOP Approval

18 Dec 16

Revere's Riders

PO Box 9571

Las Vegas, NV 89191

MEMORANDUM FOR RR CLUB MEMBERS

The enclosed Standard Operating Procedures address typical activities. On 25 April 2015, the RR Board of Directors reviewed the initial SOPs and passed the following resolution:

WHEREAS, the board of directors has reviewed the proposed Standard Operating Procedures (SOP),

WHEREAS, the SOP are based upon best practices in our field,

RESOLVED, that the proposed SOP are approved and in effect,

RESOLVED FURTHER, that the board shall review the SOP annually,

RESOLVED FURTHER, that the President or Vice President may approve additions, subtractions, or other changes to the SOP from time to time, except that neither shall remove any safety precautions.

This revision reflects an annual update and does not affect safety procedures. Drafts were circulated among the membership for 30 days and inputs solicited. The updated SOPs is **approved** / ~~rejected~~. It will go into effect immediately and be reviewed on at least an annual basis. It supersedes any previous versions, effective 1 January 2017.

Respectfully,

**//SIGNED-CMS18DEC16//**

Christopher M. Seidler

# Administration

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## Revere's Rider Event Scheduling

## Event Plans

### Overview

In general, history is woven into our other existing events. For a full-day event it is suggested to include three history segments of about 20 minutes duration each. Shorter events should have less history.

It is also possible to do a standalone history presentation. These can be effective for youth groups, at living history evets, libraries, and other similar venues. Event plans for these are at the discretion of the storyteller.

### Sample Pairings

For Basic Events, consider telling “The Midnight Ride of Paul Revere.” It occurs first chronologically and is very impactful.

For intermediate events, consider telling “1776.” Alternatively, for Carbine Events, “Bunker Hill” can be focused on in great detail and it is very relevant. A third option is to select other anecdotes either from April 19 or other Revolutionary War history. Repeating “The Midnight Ride” is an option but remember most participants have already heard that content as they previously attended basic events.

# History & Storytelling



## Storyteller’s Guide

Congratulations on taking the first step on the road to sharing the history and heritage of this country with other Americans. Many people find this to be an intimidating task and it is our hope that the information in this document will make it easier for you to tackle this new skill-set.

Like marksmanship, public speaking and storytelling is a skill to be learned. Just as it is highly unlikely for someone to shoot a sharpshooter score the first time they pick up a rifle, one should not expect to be perfect at storytelling the first time. Just as any other skill, this is one that requires thought and practice.

### The Basics of Public Speaking

* *Set the Stage:* Ensure that you are positioned where you can be seen and heard by the audience. Make eye-contact with everyone throughout the presentation.
* *Speak Up:* If you have a larger audience or are in an outdoors space with other competing noises, you may have to speak louder than you normally would to ensure that everyone can hear you. This doesn’t mean that you should shout, though!
* *Slow Down:* It is common for people to speak much faster in front of an audience than they usually would. Be conscious of this, slow down, and enunciate clearly. Don’t be afraid of silence, either. A brief pause to reorganize your thoughts is much more effective than filling that silence with unnecessary words such as “uh,” or overuse of “and” or “like.”

### The Basics of Storytelling

* *Find the Story:* All stories have a beginning, middle and end. The story rises and builds to a climax and then tapers back down to a conclusion. Know your storyline! Additionally, you don’t want to get bogged down in extraneous details. You should have a detailed knowledge of what you are speaking about, but that doesn’t mean that your audience needs to know every little bit. They won’t remember it and it will distract from your message. Pare the story down to the essentials.
* *Find Your Voice:* No two people should tell a story exactly the same way. Find the parts of the story that speak to you and build your story around those parts. It will have a bigger impact on the audience because it had an impact on you. Listen to other storytellers, borrow from them when you hear something that resonates, but don’t try to copy.
* *Prepare:* There is no need to memorize your story ahead of time. Nor should you plan on reading word-for-word from a script. However, preparation is still necessary. Notecards or an outline can be very helpful without interfering with your presentation. Ultimately, you need to be comfortable with your knowledge of the subject. In addition to listening to other storytellers, reading the recommended source material and/or doing research on your own will help to familiarize you with the topic.

### Learning Styles

Not everyone learns in the same way. Some people are great listeners, while others prefer to see something written down. While storytelling is inherently a spoken form of communication, there are some things you can do to help maintain the interest and attention of your audience.

*Visual Aids:* Maps, pictures and handouts and a host of other material can all be judiciously used to aid in the understanding of the story. For example, a common pitfall in the April 19th story is the large cast of characters. It can be difficult for a listener to keep the names and identities straight. A few pictures of important people, displayed at the appropriate times in the story, can make it easier to follow along. As in all things, though, moderation is key.

*Audience Interaction:* Getting people involved will keep their interest. Asking a focus question or two at the beginning gives the audience something to listen for. Involving them throughout the story can also be beneficial.

### How to Get Started

*Pick a story.* Don’t feel that you need to jump in head first with a full hour-long presentation! Choose a shorter portion, a five minute story or a ten to twenty minute section of a larger story to start with. If you need help, ask your Event Director or anyone on the History committeefor some tips or to listen to your presentation before you share it at an event.

## The Midnight Ride of Paul Revere

### Notes

This outline is not intended as a straight-jacket. No two storytellers will tell this story the same way; this is simply a framework to get you started on the path.

You are encouraged to read David Hackett Fisher’s “Paul Revere’s Ride” before attempting to tell this story.

It is strongly recommended that the story not be told all at once. Plan for breaks between sections. The three sections (Lexington Green, the North Bridge, Merriam’s Corner) presented here are a suggested method of division only. The entire story should be concluded or brought to a reasonable end during a single day of an event.

It is also recommended that the entire story be told in approximately an hour. If dividing the story into three sections as suggested above, each section should be roughly 20 minutes long.

### Objectives

At its heart, the Midnight Ride of Paul Revere is a story about choices. Today, many people live with the feeling that their own individual actions do not matter in the grand scheme of things. This leads to apathy – if your actions can have no real effect, then why act at all? This story is intended to show how false that belief is. The choices and actions of a single individual can change the course of history.

To this end, the wise storyteller will tell this tale in a way that emphasizes the role of individual choices and actions, from the well-known actions of Paul Revere that led to over ten thousand militia marching in less than eight hours, to Robert Newman’s more obscure choice to light the lanterns atop the Old North Church, despite knowing he would be arrested. There are many such choices to highlight throughout the course of this story.

### Lexington Green

#### Setting The Stage

* Consider starting “in the action” then moving back to cover some of the stage setting; don’t get bogged down here spending too much time on the entire history of the British colonies in North America!
* Briefly describe the events of the early 1770s
* Intolerable Acts
* Powder raids
* Introduce the main players in Boston
* General Gage
* Colonel Smith
* Major Pitcairn
* Dr. Joseph Warren
* Paul Revere
* William Dawes
* New orders for General Gage arrive from England
* Warren and Revere make contingency plans to carry warnings out of Boston

#### Midnight Ride

* Warren and Revere suspect that something is up, riders dispatched into the countryside
* Dawes travels overland
* Revere crosses the river to Charlestown
* Robert Newman lights two lanterns in Old North Church
* Dawes and Revere warn Lexington that “the Regulars are out” and continue on towards Concord
* Joined by Samuel Prescott, the three ride into an ambush. Prescott is the only one able to continue.

#### March Of The British

* Gage attempts to send his forces out in secrecy but problems abound
* The river crossing takes too long
* The supplies provided by the Navy for Gage’s men are rotten
* Smith is worried about lost time and losing surprise, sends Pitcairn and light infantry ahead

#### Battle Of Lexington

* Introduce Captain Parker
* Parker is sick and will die in a matter of months, still rallies his men on the green
* The militia debates what to do, even disperses to the tavern for a while
* When the Regulars arrive, some 60-70 militia men are on Lexington Green
* Jesse Adair does not continue on the road to Concord, turns right, leading Regulars towards Lexington meetinghouse – where the militia stand
* Parker “Stand your ground. Don’t fire unless fired upon, but if they want a war, let it begin here!”
* British “Disperse, ye damned rebels, lay down your arms!”
* Parker orders men to stand down, but a shot rings out
* Regulars fire into the militia without orders
* Regulars begin bayonetting militia, entering public buildings and private homes
* Colonel Smith arrives, forces the regulars back into order
* Victory volley to empty muskets
* Regulars march to Concord
* Eight colonists killed – five sets of fathers and sons broken by death

### The North Bridge

#### Raising The Militia

* Samuel Prescott carries the alarm to Concord and beyond
* Militia begin arriving from other towns
* Debate what course of action to take – march out and meet the Regulars, wait in town, or retreat to Punkatasset Hill for more reinforcements
* Acton
* Introduce Isaac Davis and family
* Isaac has four sick children but marches with his minutemen anyway
* “Take care of the children”

#### Arrival Of The British

* Colonel Smith’s forces arrive in Concord, begin searching town
* Not much is found
* 3 canon destroyed
* Liberty pole torn down
* Burning of the Liberty pole
* Fire spreads
* Colonists and Regulars work together to extinguish flames
* From Punkatasset Hill, smoke is seen
* “Will we stand here while they burn our town?”

#### Battle Of Concord

* Colonel Barrett orders the militia to march to the North Bridge
* “Don’t fire unless fired upon
* Isaac Davis and Acton militia lead the way
* “I have not a man who is afraid to go.”
* Regulars at North Bridge outnumbered by approaching militia
* Withdraw across bridge, lose formation
* Regulars fire without orders
* Initial volley kills Isaac Davis and Abner Hosmer
* “Fire fellow soldiers, for God’s sake, fire as fast as you can!”
* Major Buttrick orders militia to fire on Regulars
* Half of the regular officers killed
* Regulars break and run

### Merriam's Corner

#### Merriam's Corner

* Colonel Smith begins retreat to Boston
* Militia continue gathering
* At Merriam’s Corner, shots fired again
* No colonial injuries; Regulars killed and wounded
* Militia continue harassing the British column
* No longer waiting to be fired upon first
* Parker’s Revenge
* Lexington militia waited for the Regulars to return
* Surprise attack wounds Colonel Smith, unhorses Pitcairn
* Regulars break morale entirely

#### Reinforcements & The Moving Circle Of Fire

* Brigadier General Earl Percy meets Colonel Smith’s column in Lexington with reinforcements
* Earl Percy uses artillery to fend off the militia
* Allows for a brief rest before continuing
* General Heath arrives and takes command of militia
* Implements moving circle of fire
* Surrounds Regular column with a ring of skirmishers at a distance
* Militia continue inflicting casualties on Regulars and sapping morale

#### Menotomy

* Fighting grows more intense
* Earl Percy nearly killed
* Regulars lose control
* British soldiers began to commit atrocities
* Civilians murdered, churches and other buildings looted
* More die in Menotomy than in Lexington and Concord combined
* Earl Percy manages to break through
* Leads men into Charlestown and safety
* Militia surround Boston

### Bibliography

Hacket-Fischer, David. *Paul Revere’s Ride.* Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1994.

## 1776

### Abstract

Following the skirmishes at Lexington and Concord in Massachusetts on April 19, 1775, the spirit of resistance swept Britain’s colonies in America. This outline explores the critical period of 1775-1776. It outlines the victory at Boston, the soaring ideals of the Declaration of Independence, the crushing colonial defeats in New York and New Jersey, and culminates with Washington's desperate gamble in December 1776 on the banks of the Delaware.

### Themes: The Spirit Of 1776

The “Spirit of 1776” holds a special place in American mythos. This spirit has been referenced by artists, judges, historians, and many other Americans. Our challenge is to share the true story of 1776, from its soaring declarations of freedom and human dignity in the early rosy days of summer to the abject crisis where lives, fortunes, and sacred honor hung in the balance during the waning twilight of the darkest days of the year.

This tale encompasses three broad themes: the ringing clarion call of the Declaration, perseverance through Crisis, and resolve to see things through Liberty or Death. The common thread through all is that of choices. Men chose to sign the Declaration of Independence, and the soldiers in the field supported it and chose to stay and fight. Storytellers are encouraged to read the primary and secondary sources, ponder the themes of 1776 for themselves, and frame the story in a brief but powerful manner for their students. To the maximum extent possible, let the words of those who were there speak through primary sources, and keep “preaching” or “pontificating” to a minimum.

### Guidepost Notes

Each portion of the story should take about 20 minutes to present to your students, resulting in a total lesson time of about an hour. Each portion is in turn split into three or four guideposts, which means a pacing of about five minutes per guidepost is about right. Within each guidepost, you will notice several opportunities for “excursions.” The wise storyteller will practice each portion of the story and determine if they have time to include an optional excursion. Additionally, there are many opportunities to expand upon the portions presented here. Storytellers are encouraged to weave in characters, stories, or other events which interest them and their students. This outline is intended as a guide, not a straitjacket.

### Lives, Fortunes, And Sacred Honor

#### bunker hill

* April 19, 1775: Briefly recap Col Smith’s march; Boston is immediately besieged by militia
* Visual Aid: Show or sketch map of Boston. Key points are the city itself and the dominating hills of Dorchester Neck & Charleston Neck. Whoever can dominate the heights controls the city. A simple sketch is more than adequate.



* June 1775: American Committee of Safety learns that the British are planning an operation to seize and fortify Dorchester (Wood 3), and thus resolve to take the initiative by seizing Charleston themselves
* Col William Prescott commands American militia, who move in overnight and rapidly entrench
* June 17: Americans repulse two British advances but are ultimately overrun by Howe’s redcoats
*Optional excursion: Use John Trumbull’s famous painting as a visual aid and discuss the death of Maj Pitcairn on the third and final charge (he was prominent on Apr 19) and Joseph Warren*
* Losses (Wood 32): American 441 out of 3000,
British 1150 out of 2500; losses of officers, elite light infantry and grenadiers as high as 80%
* The high cost paid to take Bunker Hill was shocking to British; parliament resolved to send 2K immediately and have an army of 20K in America by 1776 (McCullough 7)
* *Optional excursion: Gun Control & the Siege (Kopel)*
* *Apr 23: Gov Gage offers to allow Boston residents to leave if they surrender their arms. 2674 arms were collected; Gage refuses to allow Bostonians to leave.*
* *June 19: Following Bunker Hill, Gage again allows Bostonians to turn in arms, and states that possession of arms will be treated as treason.*

#### The Guns Of Ticonderoga & Evacuation Of Boston

* July 3: George Washington arrives to take command of the colonial forces at Boston
* Begins to impose discipline, improve defenses, and focus on sanitation
* Eager to take the initiative and attack Boston in Sep & Oct out of fears that the militia will melt away, but defers to councils of war which decide to continue siege
* *Optional Excursion: Arrival of the Riflemen (Fischer 22-25, McCullough 38)*
* *Optional Excursion--September: Benedict Arnold takes 1K colonials North to a surprise attack on Quebec. If you choose to discuss this side story, the perspective of rifleman Daniel Morgan is perhaps most interesting and relevant.*
* November 17: Henry Knox, 25 year old bookseller, travels to Ft Ticonderoga to retrieve heavy artillery. The fort had previously been captured by Benedict Arnold and Ethan Allen’s “Green Mountain Boys” from NH/VT. By the end of Jan (o/a 27 Jan), Knox returns to Boston with 59 canons weighing nearly 60 tons.
* March 4, 1776: Washington seizes Dorchester Heights with a quick overnight operation and emplaces Knox’s cannon atop the hills, menacing Boston
* March 8: Washington receives word that if the British are allowed to evacuate, the city will not be burned, and on March 17 the British sail away with 8906 soldiers, 1100 loyalists, 667 women and 553 children (McCullough 104)

#### Declaration Of Independence

* Jan 10, 1776: The pamphlet “Common Sense” is published
* Previous to this time, mood among Army was that they were fighting for rights as Englishmen
* Washington wrote of the pamphlet,

“My countrymen, I know from their form of government and steady attachment heretofore to royalty, will come reluctantly into the idea of independency, but time and persecution brings many wonderful things to pass, and by private letters which I have recently received… I find Common Sense is working a powerful change there in the minds of many men” (McCulluough 112).

* Washington discerns that next blow is likely to fall at New York and moves the Army there immediately; GW moves his headquarters on April 4, and arrived by 13 April
* First time most of the New England militia left the environs of Boston
* General Lee, Washington’s #2, had started fortifications and Washington continued
* The British Arrive (McCullough 134)
* June 29: First 45 British ships arrive in the lower bay
* Major Warships: Asia (64 guns), Centurion & Chatham (50 guns), Phoenix (40 guns), Greyhound (30 guns)… total of 120 ships…
* Troops embarked: Washington’s staff estimated 25-30K (McCullough 135)
* July 2: British start landing on Staten Island
* Was the largest expeditionary force ever sent abroad by Britain
* Washington’s General Orders of July 9, at 6 PM (McCullough 137)

“The general hopes this important event will serve as a fresh incentive to every officer and soldier to act with fidelity and courage, as knowing that now the peace and safety of his country depends (under God) solely on the success of our arms…”

* Set the scene: Enormous British flotilla, 25K+ regulars outnumbering the still ragged Continentals in the city… and the Declaration represents an act of treason which cannot be taken back
* Read key excerpts from the Declaration of Independence as it would have been read to the troops. The preamble and final paragraphs, at a minimum, are worthwhile. Alternatively, print out a half dozen cards with a sentence or two each on them and pass them out to the audience to read to keep them engaged.

We hold these truths to be self-evident, that all men are created equal, that they are endowed by their Creator with certain unalienable Rights, that among these are Life, Liberty and the pursuit of Happiness.--That to secure these rights, Governments are instituted among Men, deriving their just powers from the consent of the governed, --That whenever any Form of Government becomes destructive of these ends, it is the Right of the People to alter or to abolish it, and to institute new Government, laying its foundation on such principles and organizing its powers in such form, as to them shall seem most likely to effect their Safety and Happiness… But when a long train of abuses and usurpations, pursuing invariably the same Object evinces a design to reduce them under absolute Despotism, it is their right, it is their duty, to throw off such Government, and to provide new Guards for their future security.

*We, therefore, the Representatives of the united States of America, in General Congress, Assembled, appealing to the Supreme Judge of the world for the rectitude of our intentions, do, in the Name, and by Authority of the good People of these Colonies, solemnly publish and declare, That these United Colonies are, and of Right ought to be Free and Independent States... And for the support of this Declaration, with a firm reliance on the protection of divine Providence, we mutually pledge to each other* ***our******Lives, our Fortunes and our sacred Honor.***

* Peace meetings & British Reinforcements
* 20 July: Washington meets with Howe’s personal adjutant to hear a peace proposal; Washington refuses to accept a letter from Howe and remarks courteously that he was “not vested with any powers on this subject by those from whom he derived his authority and power… Those who have committed no fault want no pardon… We are only defending what we deem our indisputable rights” (McCullough 145-146)… Peace talks effectively break down.
* August: British flotilla consists of over 400 ships, 32,000 troops landed on Staten Island; the entire city of NY had only 30K inhabitants and it was the largest city in North America (McCullough 148-149)
* End with a mini-benediction:
* The Declaration of Independence stated in plain words what the Continental Army had increasingly known was necessary
* Washington’s men are inspired by the ringing words of the Declaration, but they are facing the mightiest army to ever be sent to North America – ever
* The Declaration has committed the Congress and the Continentals to a total victory or total defeat: their lives, fortunes, and sacred honor hang in the balance.

### Crisis

#### Long Island

* Defensive Disposition of the Continental Army
* Washington faces challenging problem to defend NYC without control of the sea
* Stationed half the troops in Manhattan, half across the river in Brooklyn on Long Island, and fortified along the rivers; about 4500 troops in Brooklyn
* Defenses intended to exact a heavy price similar to Bunker Hill: outer line of defenses on Guan Heights and then a solid fort in Brooklyn itself
* Aug 22 Pennsylvania Riflemen under Col Hand report British landing and fall back
* Washington sends a few reinforcements, bringing total # to 8K
* British troops number about 20K including Hessians
* Night March
* On night of August 26, Cornwallis takes 10K men around the flank of the American army, finding an undefended pass through the Heights thanks to loyalists
* Grant and the Hessians start a frontal diversionary attack at 0900 to pin down defenders
* American defenses collapse once flanked; almost 2K KIA/WIA/captured
* The Miraculous Escape
* Remaining Continentals pinned against river in strong fort
* British begin siege operations; Washington realizes that without control of the river, the Royal Navy can trap his army
* Late on August 29, Washington organizes an escape from Long Island… Washington has hardy fishermen from Marblehead, MA to row his army across; the escape takes longer than expected and Washington worries that the Royal Navy will cut them to pieces in the morning
* A miraculous fog blows in at dawn on August 30, shielding the evacuation from view; Washington, who took the last boat back to Manhattan, landed at about 0700

#### New York

* 11 Sep: Congressional delegation of John Adams, Ben Franklin, and Edward Rutledge meets with Admiral Howe to discuss peace; fails to reach terms
* 12 Sep: Washington decides to abandon NY, with consent from congress
* **Kip’s Bay/15 Sep:** British forces land halfway down Manhattan Island; militia collapse, and British rapidly march across Manhattan, threatening to cut off the 1/3 of GW’s army that remains in lower Manhattan—luckily Howe stops and the Continentals narrowly escape
***Dangerous Dames Side Story:*** *Mary Lindley Murray is credited with delaying William Howe and his army during General Washington's retreat from New York following the British landing at Kip's Bay, 15 September 1776. As the story goes, Mrs. Robert Murray, the mother of Lindley and John, invited the officers to tea[7] at her mansion of Inclenberg and, through feminine wiles, succeeded in delaying the British troops for a period sufficient to allow a successful American retreat.[1][8] She is said by Rev. T. Dewitt Talmage to have saved American independence by detaining Lord Howe long enough to permit Israel Putnam to pass up the Greenwich road from the city and join the forces of George Washington in the north end of the island, before Howe was able to overtake him. This detention and the stories told by the fair friend saved 4,000 men, who otherwise would have been cut off and captured.*
* *James Thacher, M.D., a gossipy surgeon with the Continental Army, kept a journal that is one of the prime sources of information about the military happenings of the times. In an entry for Sept. 20, Thacher tells the story as follows: "The British generals...repaired to the house of a Mr. Robert Murray, a Quaker and friend of our cause; Mrs. Murray treated them with cake and wine, and they were induced to tarry two hours or more, Governor Tryon frequently joking her about her American friends. By this happy incident general Putnam, by continuing his march, escaped...It has since become almost a common saying among our officers, that Mrs. Murray saved this part of the American army."*
* **Harlem Heights/16 Sep (Optional Rifleman Story)**: Continental Rangers under Col Knowlton conduct recon and run into large British force; they withdraw. Washington devised a trap for the British force; a feint party drew them into a fight with 900 Continentals, while Knowlton reinforced with three companies of riflemen would sneak around the flank. The plan worked, and the British withdrew. The Americans withdrew once major British reinforcement arrived.
Howe lost 14-90 KIA/154-300 WIA; Americans lost 30 KIA/100 WIA. This was the first battlefield victory Washington won, but ultimately was minor and inconclusive.
* **White Plains/28 Oct**: British forced Washington out of a defensive position; 150-500 Americans lost, 267 British/Hessian lost. Luckily, before Howe could crush Washington’s army, heavy rain fell that allowed Washington to get away; he snuck into the hills
* **Ft Washington/16 Nov**: Howe turned back south and besieged mighty Ft Washington with 3000 American troops in Northern Manhattan, the last major bastion of American resistance in NY. The entire garrison was lost (most captured), which was a complete disaster.
* **Fort Lee/20 Nov**: Fort Lee guarded the NJ side of the river. Once Ft Washington fell, the Royal Navy controlled the Hudson river and Ft Lee became untenable. Once the Hessians landed on the NJ side of the river, Ft Lee was abandoned. The Continental Army lost almost all of their supplies in the hasty retreat, including much needed tents, winter gear, etc.

#### Fox Chase

* Washington’s situation was growing dire: His army had suffered several catastrophic defeats, he was driven out of New York, and most of his troops had lost their supplies at Ft Lee.
* Gen Cornwallis dispatched to chase Washington, who fled through New Jersey; Cornwallis treated the affair as a “fox chase”
* 30 Nov: Howe issues a proclamation offering amnesty to anyone who will swear an oath of loyalty to the King. Many come forward to take the oath.
* Washington finally crosses the Delaware river into New Jersey in early December; Cornwallis ordered to stop his advance and go into winter quarters.
* 12 Dec: American General Charles Lee captured by the British.

#### Crisis

* Washington is down to about 5000 effectives. He warns Congress that he cannot stop the British if they try to force their way into Pennsylvania. Panic sweeps Philadelphia and Congress evacuates the city.
* Morale is low; the troops are lacking supplies. Many lack shoes and literally leave bloody footprints in the snow. Howe’s offer of amnesty is tempting many.
* 18 Dec: Washington is privately despairing. In a private letter to his brother on 18 Dec, he wrote:

*…between you and me, I think our affairs are in a very bad situation… I have no doubt but that General Howe will still make an attempt upon Philadelphia this winter. I see nothing to oppose him a fortnight hence…* ***I think the game is pretty near up****…*

* Washington knows that most of his army’s enlistments expire on 31 December. His army will shrink to fewer than 1500 on the New Year.
* 21 Dec: The winter solstice and darkest day of the year… Washington begins to formulate a daring plan to attack – a last, desperate gamble. Rumors and hints can be found in the letters of his closest confidantes (private secretary Reed, Gen Nathaniel Greene, etc).
* 23 Dec: In this context, Thomas Paine publishes a remarkable pamphlet. Paine is traveling with General Nathaniel Greene, one of Washington’s trusted commanders. He has taken a musket and shared the trouble of the march. He is also a radical whig and writer, known as “the Common Sense fellow.” On the 24th – Christmas Eve – Washington ordered the pamphlet to be read to his soldiers:

*THESE are the times that try men's souls. The summer soldier and the sunshine patriot will, in this crisis, shrink from the service of their country; but he that stands by it now, deserves the love and thanks of man and woman. Tyranny, like hell, is not easily conquered; yet we have this consolation with us, that the harder the conflict, the more glorious the triumph. What we obtain too cheap, we esteem too lightly: it is dearness only that gives every thing its value. Heaven knows how to put a proper price upon its goods; and it would be strange indeed if so celestial an article as FREEDOM should not be highly rated. Britain, with an army to enforce her tyranny, has declared that she has a right (not only to TAX) but "to BIND us in ALL CASES WHATSOEVER" and if being bound in that manner, is not slavery, then is there not such a thing as slavery upon earth.*

* Read the primary source, or use the above described technique of having the students each read a sentence. You may want to go through Crisis and find a few other choice quotes that appeal to you. “If there must be trouble, let it be in my day, that my child may have peace” is a good one, as is the one about panics, or the discussion of Tories.

### Liberty Or Death

#### The Crossing

* 14 Dec – Hessians established winter quarters along the Delaware River; one brigade of 1500 men under the battle-hardened Col Rall was encamped at the village of Trenton. Fortuitously, New Jersey militia skirmishes on 23 December drew 2000 Hessians away from Trenton.
* Americans formed up on PA side of river and were passed the password: LIBERTY OR DEATH
* Ferried across in broad bottomed Durham boats by Col Glover’s Massachusetts fisherman from Marblehead, the same men responsible for the escape from LI, NY
* River was full of floating ice chunks; sleeting and freezing rain
* Apocryphal quote from WA: "Shift your fat ass, Henry, but don't swamp the \*\*\* boat!"
Washington was approachable and could command gutter language from time to time. Witnesses report this quote and report uncontrollable laughter from the ranks… He also lead from the front and was one of the first to cross, with the artillery.
* Artillery did not finish crossing until 3 AM; inf not until 4 AM (4 hrs behind schedule)
* The diversionary attacks Washington was counting on could not cross the river
* The approach march
* Washington split army into two wings, one under Greene and one under Sullivan
* Many men lacked boots; columns left bloody prints in snow
* Gen Sullivan send Washington a note warning him that the powder was wet. Washington replied, “Tell General Sullivan to use the bayonet. I am resolved to take Trenton." Also, he ensured strong artillery (which worked better in wet conditions) was available to each column.
* Washington rode up and down the line encouraging the men… but secretly was very concerned. The surprise attack was supposed to occur at dawn. At daylight the Americans were still about two miles outside town.

#### Trenton

* Hessians on alert – not drunk and senseless
* Col Rall had been harassed by partisans and received warnings from Loyalists
* New Jersey militia had raided Trenton earlier
* Hessians were on alert on Christmas Eve, with 1/3 the force on sentry or ready to move
* American soldier John Greenwood, who fought in the battle and supervised Hessians afterward, said, "I am certain not a drop of liquor was drunk during the whole night, nor, as I could see, even a piece of bread eaten."
* First contact
* 0800, Washington leads an initial attack and breaks the outpost at a cooper’s shop
* Pennsylvania riflemen under Col Hand block the road to Princeton to the North
* Hessian detachments start falling back in an orderly fashion, fighting through town
* Main assault
* Sullivan’s wing attacks from the river road and blocked the bridge over Assunpink Creek to the West
* Washington set up on high ground and brought artillery into play
* Hessians tried to seize American cannons but are driven back with grapeshot
* Col Rall tried to organize a counterattack, but the German weapons wouldn’t fire and the attack fizzles out; Hessians surrender
* After Action
* The Hessian forces suffered 22 fatalities, 83 serious injuries, and 896 captures. The Americans suffered only two fatalities (from exposure on the march) and five injuries from war wounds, including a near fatal wound to future president James Monroe.
* Col Rall and all four Hessians battalion commanders were killed
* Also captured were approximately 1,000 arms and some much-needed ammunition
* Washington realized his 2400 man force was too small to press and withdrew to PA

#### Assunpink Creek

* Followup
* After the success at Trenton, Washington learned that the Hessians and British had withdrawn to Princeton, and on 27 Dec proposed a follow on raid
* Several crossing attempts were aborted due to weather, and on New Year’s Eve the army was still in PA
* Enlistments for most troops expired on New Year’s Day
* The Appeal
* Washington addressed troops on New Year’s eve and offered then a ten dollar bounty if they would re-enlist for six months. $10 back then would be worth a few hundred dollars today. When he made the offer, he had no known authority to do so and was basically risking making the payment out of pocket.
* Present the following excerpt from Washington’s Crossing. I suggest reading the bold text verbatim. Pause afterwards and ask the audience what they would do under such conditions.

|  |
| --- |
| *Washington agreed to try the same appeal with the Continentals in Greene’s and Sullivan’s divisions [to convince the men to stay with the army for a few more weeks beyond the expiration of their enlistments]. He mustered the New England regiments and begged them to serve another six weeks. A sergeant remembered that the general “personally addressed us...told us that our services were greatly needed, and that we could od more for our country than we ever could at any future date, and in the most affectionate manner entreated us to stay.” Then the regimental commanders asked all who would stay to step forward. “The drums beat for volunteers,” one remembered, “but not a man turned out.” One explained that his comrades were “worn down with fatigue an privations, had their hearts fixed on home and comforts of the domestic circle.” The men watched as Washington “wheeled his horse about, rode in front of the regiment,” and spoke to them again. Long afterward, a sergeant still remembered his words.**“****My brave fellows,” Washington began, “you have done all I asked you to do, and more than could be reasonably expected; but your country is at stake, your wives, your houses, and all that you hold dear. You have worn yourselves out with the fatigues and hardships, but we do not know how to spare you. If you will consent to stay one month longer; you will render that service to the cause of liberty, and to your country, which you probably can never do under any other circumstances.”****The drums rolled again. The sergeant recalled that “the soldiers felt the force of the appeal” and began to talk among themselves. One said, “I will remain if you will.” Another said, “We cannot go home under such circumstances.” A few men stepped forward, then several others, then many more and “their example was [followed] by nearly all who were fit for duty in the regiment, amounting to about two hundred volunteers.” These were veterans who understood what they were being asked to do. They knew well what the cost might be. One of them remembered later that nearly half the men who stepped forward would be killed in the fighting or dead of disease “soon after.”**---from Washington's Crossing by David Hackett Fischer.* |

* On 1 January, a chest of money arrived from Philidelphia to pay the troops, and Congress voted Washington emergency dictatorial powers
* Washington had about 6000 effectives and moved back to Trenton, which he began fortifying
* British Counterstroke
* When news of Col Rall’s disaster reached the British command, Gen Cornwallis was dispatched with 5000 men to counterattack; Cornwallis skimmed the cream of the army and had some of the best units available including Guards, Highlanders, Grenadiers and 12 lb artillery (Fischer “The Bridge”)
* On 2 January, Cornwallis left Princeton and began the 11 mile march to Trenton
* American riflemen under Col Hand delayed Cornwallis through several careful ambushes and good use of the terrain; fate also intervened, and a sudden thaw turned the roads into muck and mire--Cornwallis did not arrive until late in the afternoon
***OPTIONAL EXCURSION****: Detailing the exploits of the riflemen and tactics used is easily a five minute segue.*
* The Stone Bridge
* Washington had dug in carefully behind Assunpink Creek, crossed by a prominent stone bridge and a few fords
* Hand’s riflemen, hard pressed with the German Jagers and British hot on their heels, fell back across the bridge; some Americans caught on wrong side; Hessians had ordered “No Quarter!” and carried it out, and an American chaplain was executed on his knees praying (Fischer “the Bridge”)—the retreat of screening forces was in danger of becoming an utter rout and disrupting the defensive lines
* At this critical moment, Washington posted himself on his horse at the bridge; witness Private Johnathan Howland wrote, “the noble horse of General Washington stood with his breast pressed close against” the bridge rail. “The firm, composed and majestic countenance of the general inspired confidence… At the end of the bridge, I pressed against the shoulder of the general’s horse and in contact with the boot of the general. The horse stood as firm as the rider, and seemed to understand that he was not to quit his post and station.”
* Though daylight was fading, Cornwallis attacked the American fortifications three times and tried to force the bridge; Washington placed himself at the bridge and ensured the lines held, personally managing reinforcements.
* Artillery shattered the third and final British push with point-blank grapeshot; an artillerist wrote, “the bridge looked red as blood, with their killed and wounded and red coats.”
* The Escape
* Cornwallis withdrew after the third attack; "We've got the old fox safe now. We'll go over and bag him in the morning."
* Washington had a skeleton crew make digging noises, firing two cannon, and tending fires, as if staying to entrench, but quietly moved his army away, to the North, and slipped away in the night
* Aftermath
* Fischer reports 100 American casualties, 365 British casualties

#### Princeton

* Washington escapes Trenton and holds a council of war
* Two pieces of vital intel arrived informed the council of war:
* Joseph Reed, a lawyer and Washington’s private secretary, led seven of the Philidelphia Light Dragoons to Princeton, abducted British prisoners who told of the troops holding the position
* Colonel John Cadwaler, of the Philidelphia Associators (militia), had found a spy in Princeton who confirmed the estimate of the enemy’s strength and provided a detailed map
* General Arthur St Clair suggested a bold strike on the British HQ at Princeton
* The March
* The roads froze again, allowing movement
* During the march, rumor of a British attack swept the ranks and militia fled in panic
* Again running late; intended to seize outposts at dawn, but was still 2 miles out of town
* Washington dispatched Gen Mercer to the left to tear up a bridge while he marched up the East of Princeton
* Simultaneously… British Gen Mawhood was preparing his command to march south and assist Cornwallis
* Mercer and the Peach Orchard
* Mercer saw Mawhood coming up and dispatched a few riflemen to stop him
* Initially, the Americans drove off a few Royal Dragoons, but Mawhood brought his numbers to bear and crushed Mercer’s command in a farmer’s peach orchard
* Col Cadwalader with 1100 Pennsylvania militia crested over the hill to assist Mercer, but the green militia broke and ran when they saw Mercer’s men fleeing
* A lone artillery battery is all that is keeping the British from crushing the continentals
* Breaking Point
* Washington personally arrives at this point and deploys Col Hand’s riflemen again to hold the line, and then personally rallies Cadwalader’s militia: “"Parade with us my brave fellows! There is but a handful of the enemy and we shall have them directly!"”
* Washington managed the lines personally, got within 30 yards of the enemy, and directed a volley
* American numbers and rifle fire took their toll; British wavered, then collapsed after a charge—Washington led a chase, shouting "It's a fine fox chase my boys!"
* Princeton Hall
* A few Regulars holed up in the college at Princeton Hall
* Young Lieutenant Alexander Hamilton, commanding artillery, fired through the window (by story taking the head off a portrait of King George), and the regulars surrendered
* Aftermath
* George Washington claimed 100 British KIA and 300 captured
* GW reported about 35 Americans KIA
* GW considered pushing on for Brunswick to seize the enemy’s rear supply depot and a chest rumored to have 70,000 pounds of cash, but Gen Greene & Col Knox talked him out of it
* The British pulled back from much of NJ, and the militia were emboldened; Militia were inspired to rise up and launched a “forage war’” targeting British supply parties which crippled the British logistics going into the spring campaign season

### The Spirit Of 1776

* Remind that the war would grind on for seven long years, with the outcome often in doubt
* Challenge students to think about what the spirit of ’76 means
* LIVES, FORTUNES, AND SACRED HONOR: Is the spirit of 1776 the excitement of Spring in Boston, as the exultant militia chased off the world’s strongest army? Is it the heady words of the Declaration of Independence, “that all men are created equal with inalienable rights?” Is it the sobering realization in the hot summer that such words were treason, and those who fought for them put their lives, fortune, and sacred honor on the line?
Quotes to ponder:
*“We must all hang together, or assuredly we shall all hang separately.” – Ben Franklin
And obviously the Declaration of Independence itself*
* CRISIS: Is the spirit of 1776 the perseverance to survive crisis after crisis? The Continentals suffered battering losses through the New York campaign in 1776. Quotes to ponder:
*“We fight, get beaten, rise, and fight again” – Gen Nathaniel Greene
Paine’s immortal words from Crisis...
“The time is now near at hand which must probably determine whether Americans are to be freemen or slaves; whether they are to have any property they can call their own; whether their houses and farms are to be pillaged and destroyed, and themselves consigned to a state of wretchedness from which no human efforts will deliver them. The fate of unborn millions will now depend, under God, on the courage and conduct of this army. Our cruel and unrelenting enemy leaves us only the choice of brave resistance, or the most abject submission. We have, therefore, to resolve to conquer or die.” – George Washington*
* LIBERTY OR DEATH: Is the spirit of 1776 the desperate conviction shown in the darkest hours of the winter solstice? Of a desperate gamble and clever counterstroke? Consider where GW got his password for the venture from: Patrick Henry.
*“Is life so dear, or peace so sweet, as to be purchased at the price of chains and slavery? Forbid it, Almighty God! I know not what course others may take; but as for me, give me liberty or give me death!”*
*Consider GW’s farewell address to put a bow on things…*
* It may not be possible to put a neat bow on the spirit of 1776. I would argue that the spirit encompasses all of these themes: the ringing clarion call of the Declaration, perseverance through Crisis, and resolve to see things through Liberty or Death. The common thread through all is that of choices. Men chose to sign the Declaration of Independence, and the soldiers in the field supported it and chose to stay and fight. During the great Crisis, the “summer soldiers and sunshine patriots” melted away, leaving a hard forged core of the Continental Line. During the desperate gamble in New Jersey Washington led free men, sharing a vision for the future, who voluntarily chose to step forward and re-enlist. The Continentals knew and truly believed the fate of unborn millions rested on their choices.
* Final thoughts to consider closing with:

*“Our country is in danger, but not to be despaired of. Our enemies are numerous and powerful; but we have many friends, determining to be free, and heaven and earth will aid the resolution. On you depend the fortunes of America. You are to decide the important question, on which rest the happiness and liberty of millions yet unborn. Act worthy of yourselves.” - Joseph Warren, March 6, 1775 (Died at Bunker Hill in Chapter one of our story)*

*“Posterity! You will never know how much it cost the present Generation to preserve your Freedom! I hope you will make good use of it. If you do not, I shall repent in Heaven, that I ever took half the Pains to preserve it.” ― John Adams*

### Bibliography

Hacket-Fischer, David. *Washington’s Crossing.* Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2004.

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# Revere's Riders Training Progression

## RR Storyteller Endorsement

### Purpose

The purpose of RR Storyteller Endorsement is to establish a fundamental baseline of knowledge, skills, and attitudes for RR Members to effectively tell history.

### Timeline

The Storyteller endorsement is intended to be completed through at least one event with 2+ hours of on the job training.

### Checklist of Tasks

|  |  |  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- | --- | --- |
| TASK | DATE | LOCATION | MASTER NAME | MASTER INITIAL |
| APPRENTICE STORYTELLER |
| Complete RR-BIT (Assistant) |  | N/A | N/A | N/A |
| Hear RR History Presentation |  |  |  |  |
| Apprentice Upgrade Complete |  |  |  |  |
| ASSISTANT STORYTELLER |
| Prepare and tell at least 10+ minutes of relevant history |  |  |  |  |
| State the RR History Goals |  |  |  |  |
| Assistant Upgrade Complete |  |  |  |  |
| CERTIFIED STORYTELLER |
| Prepare and tell “Lexington Green” |  |  |  |  |
| Prepare and tell “The North Bridge” |  |  |  |  |
| Prepare and tell “Merriam’s Corner” |  |  |  |  |
| Certification Upgrade Complete |  |  |  |  |

Table 27: Story Teller Task List

|  |
| --- |
| MASTER STORYTELLER |
| Be a Full RR Member |  | N/A | N/A | N/A |
| Tell history at 4+ live events |  |  |  |  |
| Either:1) Learn a second hr of history2) Research and prepare a history lesson plan for RR’s Instructor Materials or Newsletter |  |  |  |  |
| RR Officer Approval |  |  |  |  |
| Master Upgrade Complete |  |  |  |  |

Table 28: Story Teller Task List (contd)

### Storyteller Special Instructions and Clarification

RR Storytellers are expected to be effective communicators of relevant history with a focus on the colonial period, Revolutionary War, and early Republic. A number of RR Lesson Plans are available. Assistant Storytellers should learn a coherent story that stands on its own, appropriate for use at a shorter event. Examples include tales of individuals involved in the events of April 19, 1776. Certified Storytellers may break their presentation into several sections or combine it together. The default assumption is that Certified Storytellers have mastered the entire story of *Paul Revere’s Ride* plus some additional anecdotes. Candidates may tell all history at one event or spread it across multiple events.

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