



The Other Rider

"To arms, to arms, the war has begun."

The Lexington Alarm

It is the dawn of the American Revolution. A lone post rider powers his way through the New England countryside, alerting the colonists of the British invasion. Quick and determined, the rider will not be deterred by weather, weariness, or fear: The colonies' cause for freedom is too important. That the message he holds securely in his post-satchel not be delivered in time is an unacceptable possibility. Faster than any horse should travel, in just two hours the rider and his steed make it from Watertown, MA, to Worcester, MA—a trip that normally takes a day by horseback. Not surprisingly, the horse drops dead upon arrival.

Over the course of four days, the rider travels a total of 345 miles throughout the blossoming New England countryside—he hits Massachusetts, Connecticut, New York, and Pennsylvania, his journey ending in Philadelphia on April 24, 1775. At each stop he delivers the message, it is signed by the town leader, and the rider is then sent on to the next town. The message he delivers begins like this:

Wednesday Morning near 10 of the clock

"Watertown,

To all friends of American Liberty be it known that this morning before break of day a Brigade consisting of about 1,000 or 1,200 men landed at Phip's farm at Cambridge and Marched to Lexington, where they found a company of our Colony Militia in Arms, upon whom they fired without provocation, and killed six men and wounded 4 others. By an express from Boston we find that another brigade is now upon their march from Boston, supposed to be about 1,000..."³⁰

The results of the post rider's unwavering commitment to achieving liberty for America: The town leaders spread this message to their citizens who in turn created militias; the militias are able to prepare in time for the British attacks; the militias, everyday colonists, participate in many well-fought battles during the Revolutionary War; the United States gains its independence from Britain.

The post rider was _____

What might have happened if this message had not been delivered?

Why are his actions just as important as those of Paul Revere?

Do you think most people who do great things are recognized publicly?

Why should you do great things even if you don't receive public recognition?