

# *Flash in the Pan*

## *The Battles of Lexington, Concord, and the Retreat to Boston*

A three part, linked Mini-Campaign during the American War of Independence

### **Designer's Notes:**

When looking at the battles of Lexington, Concord, and the Retreat to Boston on their own, they do not seem like they would make for a good wargame scenario. The battles are overwhelmingly one-sided and are over very quickly. You will spend more time setting up the terrain and putting it away than you will spend playing, so why bother?

Well, it is widely recognized as the start of the American Revolutionary War making it important to some of us. It is the Colonials opportunity to show the British they are willing to stand and face them, and at the very least give them a bloody nose without simply running away. I also thought that a simple battlefields with few units is a good way for new players to learn a rules set. And being small, fast, and quick; this is also a good opportunity to play using the Solo Rules.

If that isn't enough to make players go to the effort of setting up and playing through Lexington, the victory conditions have potential benefits and penalties that carry over to the next part of this mini-campaign.

Unless you already have period buildings to use, they are not actually required. In fact, only the roads are actually needed. Though boring, the rest being a flat grassy area is sufficient for these battles. For Part C, you can declare that everything 3" away from the sides of the road are woods if sufficient woods/hills terrain pieces are not available.

Using the Flash in the Pan core rules and the troops listed, all 3 parts can be played in about 6 hours total. Using the optional rules will take longer.

## Part A, Lexington:

**Background:** On the night of April 18, 1775, around 670 British regulars\* left Boston led by Lt. Col. Francis Smith and Major John Pitcairn. They were beginning a march toward Lexington. Their mission was to destroy a stockpile



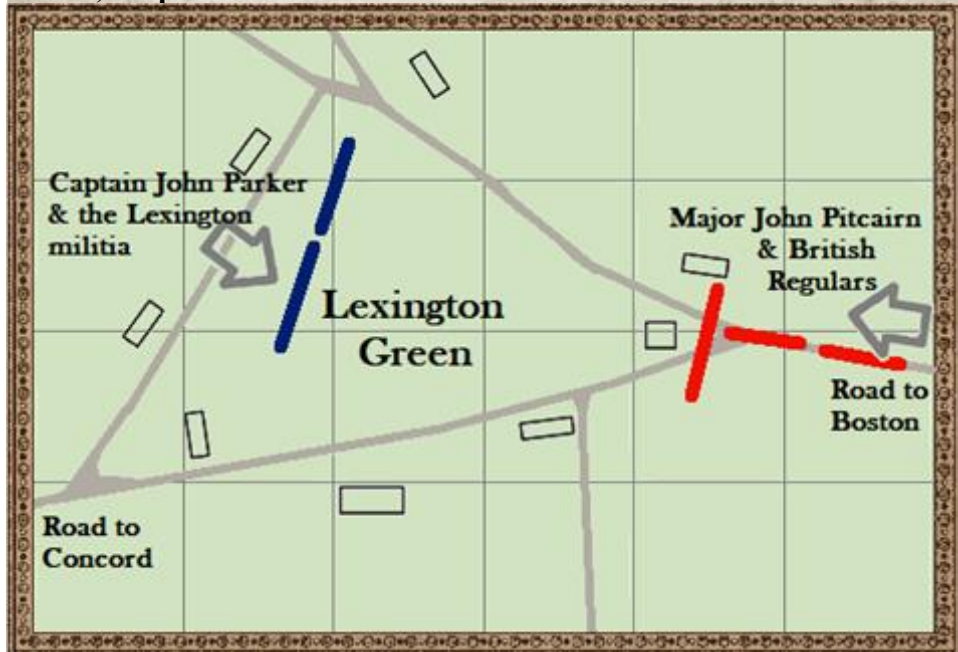
of Colonial ammunition. When they arrived at Lexington Green on April 19th, they were met by Captain John Parker and the Lexington militia who came out from the adjacent Buckman Tavern and formed in line on the Green to face the arriving British. As the sun was rising on Lexington, a shot was fired and the Colonials suffered the first casualties of the American Revolution. It was a brief encounter. Eight militiamen were killed, and one British trooper was wounded. The militia being outnumbered, fell back. The British regulars then proceeded to Concord.

\* -- 350 were from grenadier companies from the 4th, 5th, 10th, 18th, 23rd, 38th, 43rd, 47th, 52<sup>nd</sup>, and 59th Regiments of Foot, and the 1st Battalion of His Majesty's Marine Forces. 320 were light infantry from the 4th, 5th, 10th, 23rd, 38th, 43rd, 47th, 52nd, and 59th Regiments, and the 1st Battalion of the Marines. The majority of the captains commanding them were volunteers attached to them at the last minute, drawn from the regiments in Boston. The lack of familiarity was said to have caused problems during the battles of the expedition.

**Part A, Setup:** Colonial militiamen (8 Bases of Militia Infantry, 1 Average Commander (Parker)) start in 2 equal length lines, 3" apart. British troops (25 Bases of Regular Infantry, 3 Poor Leaders, 1 Average Commander (Pitcairn)) arrive in column except the leading Light Infantry unit already deployed in a Skirmish line which is just within 10" from the Colonial line. Both sides roll for Battle Dice as normal (Colonials will re-roll for Parts B & C, but the British will only carry over unused Battle Dice). The Colonial account is that they were lined up on the green. The British account is that the Colonials were behind walls and trees. We leave that up to a 50-50 chance at the start of the game. The Colonials can quit the field and 'evaporate' into the landscape at the end of any Round.



## Part A, Map:



## Part A, Victory Conditions:

Note that the British force listed in this scenario is only  $\frac{1}{4}$  of the total that will arrive here and move on to Concord, so the British not being stopped here, or the Colonials being driven from this field are inevitable and are not part of the victory conditions. Either side merely hopes to embarrass the other which will give their side momentum in the next battle.

- If the Colonials can put 4 or more DMs on the British while taking less than 4 themselves, it is a major moral victory. All British DMs carry over to Concord but Colonial's do not.
- If the Colonials can put 2 or more DMs on the British while taking less than 8 themselves, it is a minor moral victory. All British DMs carry over to Concord but only half (round down) of the Colonial's do.
- If the British can Capture a Color Standard or put 10 or more DMs on the Colonials all while taking less than 1 themselves, it is a minor victory. All British and Colonial DMs carry over to Concord.
- If the British can Kill/Capture a leader, or remove 4 Based due to Rout or DM recovery, it is a major victory. All Colonial DMs carry over to Concord but British's do not.
- Any other result is a tie. Half (round down) of the DMs for both sides carry over to Concord

## Part B, Concord:

**Background:** The alarm was raised and the militiamen of Concord and Lincoln mustered in Concord. Because the British regulars coming numbered around 670, and the Colonial militia currently there were only



250, they withdrew from the town, crossed the North Bridge, and took up a position on a hill in Capt. David Brown's (of one Concord's minute companies) own pasture. It had a good view of the bridge and they could watch British troop movements and the activity in the town. This became known as Muster Field since as they held position there, the ranks of the militia continued to grow as companies kept arriving from other towns.

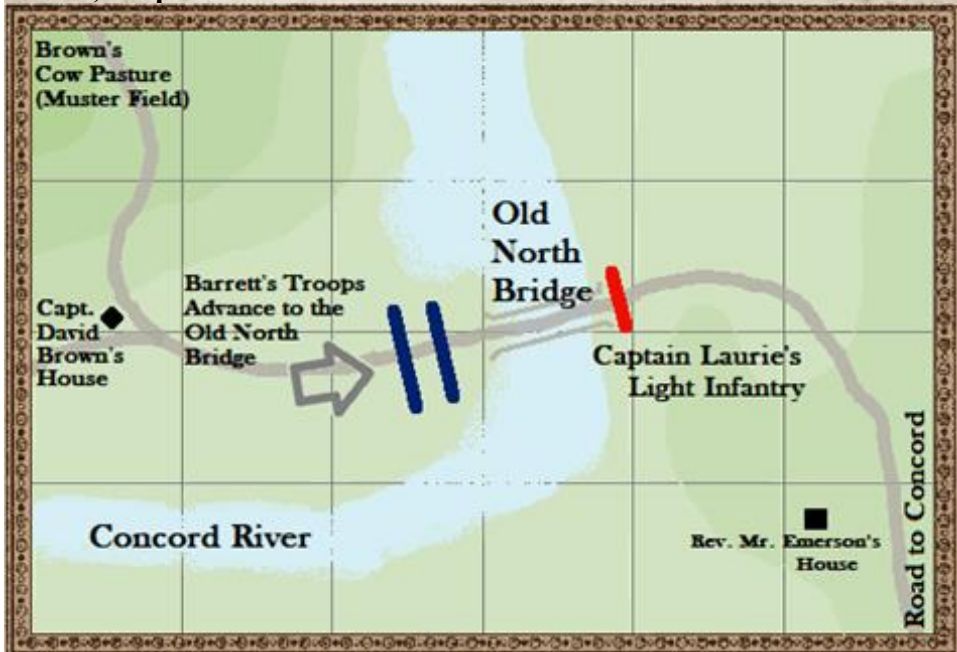
British troops divided to carry out their orders to search for and destroy weapons. Only three companies of light infantry (around 100 soldiers from the 4<sup>th</sup>, 10<sup>th</sup>, and 43<sup>rd</sup> Regiments under the relatively inexperienced command of Captain Walter Laurie) were assigned to securing the North Bridge. These companies were aware that they were outnumbered by the over 400 Colonials. At around 11:00 am, seeing smoke from the town and thinking the British were intentionally burning it, the Colonials advanced on the bridge. Shots were fired, escalating into volleys of fire which resulted in casualties on both sides. The regulars withdraw under heavy fire to rejoined the main body of British forces in Concord.

The British mission was complete so they prepared to return to Boston. They had found some, but not any great stockpile of supplies. Only one found and destroyed siege cannon was considered to be significant. Most of the shot and food thrown into a pond to destroy, was later recovered.

**Part B, Setup:** Colonial forces (4 Bases of Regular Minutemen Infantry, 12 Bases of Militia Infantry, 1 Average Commander (Lt. Col. John Robinson), 2 Average Leaders (Major John Buttrick and Capt. Isaac Davis)) start in 2 nearly equal length lines, 3" apart. British troops (4 Bases of Regular Infantry, 1 Poor Leader (Captain Laurie)) begin in column having just retreated across the Old North Bridge and are 10" from the front Colonial line. Both sides carry over unused Battle Dice from Part A; Colonials also roll as normal for additional dice. The British can quit the field and return to Concord at the end of any Round.



## Part B, Map:



## Part B, Victory Conditions:

- If the Colonials can put 12 or more DMs on the British while taking less than 10 themselves, it is a major victory. All British DMs carry over to The Retreat to Boston but Colonial's do not.
- If the Colonials can put 8 or more DMs on the British while taking less than 8 themselves, it is a minor victory. All British DMs carry over to The Retreat to Boston but only half (round down) of the Colonial's do.
- If the British can put 10 or more DMs on the Colonials all while taking less than 8 themselves, it is a minor victory. All British and Colonial DMs carry over to The Retreat to Boston.
- If the British do not need to leave the field, it is a major victory. All Colonial DMs carry over to The Retreat to Boston but the British's do not.
- Any other result is a tie. . Half (round down) of the DMs for both sides carry over to The Retreat to Boston.

## Part C, The Retreat to Boston:

**Background:** During the British troops' return march to Boston the Colonials regularly ambushed and fired on them from cover throughout the day.



Between Concord and

Lexington, being tired, thirsty, and low on ammunition, the situation became desperate with some troops surrendering and many breaking march column formation to move at a run. Luckily for them, Lt. Col. Smith's expedition was rescued by reinforcements led by Brigadier General Earl Percy. The now larger force continued to march to Boston under continued heavy fire. After they reached the safety of Charleson, the Colonial militias then took up position to start the Siege of Boston.

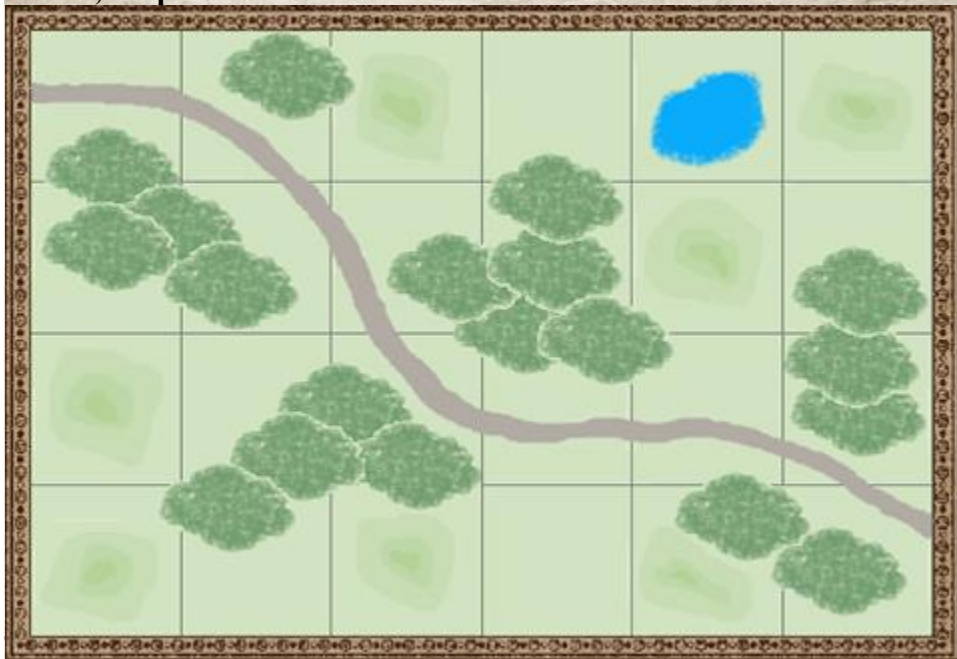
**Part C, Setup:** This represents various quick small indeterminate encounters. Colonial forces (12 Bases of Militia Infantry, 0 Leaders) begin positioned in Skirmish in woods for cover as desired. They cannot charge. British forces (14 Bases of Reg Regular Infantry, 0 Leaders) are in road column on one end of the battlefield. It can only move along the road and exit the other side unless the road is blocked. The British can also deploy up to  $\frac{1}{2}$  of their Bases as skirmishers along the sides of the road as desired to protect the column at any given time. All British have a Battleworth of 1d6, and cannot double move, due to their poor tired condition. Both sides carry over unused Battle Dice from Part B; Colonials also roll as normal for additional dice.

Battlefield may be setup as desired as long as it contains a road essentially running the length and it is heavily wooded on both sides. Hills, bridges and cross roads can be added to suit. Map shown for inspiration only.

Replay Part C 2 times with various maps if time allows: 1st replay, British have a -1 to hit due to being low on ammunition. 2nd replay, British have met up with Percy, roll for fresh Battle Dice, Skirmishers return to a Battleworth of 2d6.



## Part C, Map:



## Part C, Victory Conditions:

- If the Colonials can put 16 or more DMs on the British while taking less than 10 themselves, it is a major victory.
- If the Colonials can put 10 or more DMs on the British while taking less than 8 themselves, it is a minor victory.
- If the British can put 12 or more DMs on the Colonials all while taking less than 10 themselves, it is a minor victory.
- If the British can put 8 or more DMs on the Colonials all while taking less than 8 themselves, it is a minor victory.
- Any other result is a tie.

## Overall Mini-Campaign, Victory Points:

Simple total the below points for each side

Minor Moral Victory = 1 point

Major Moral Victory = 2 points

Minor Victory = 3 point

Major Victory = 4 points