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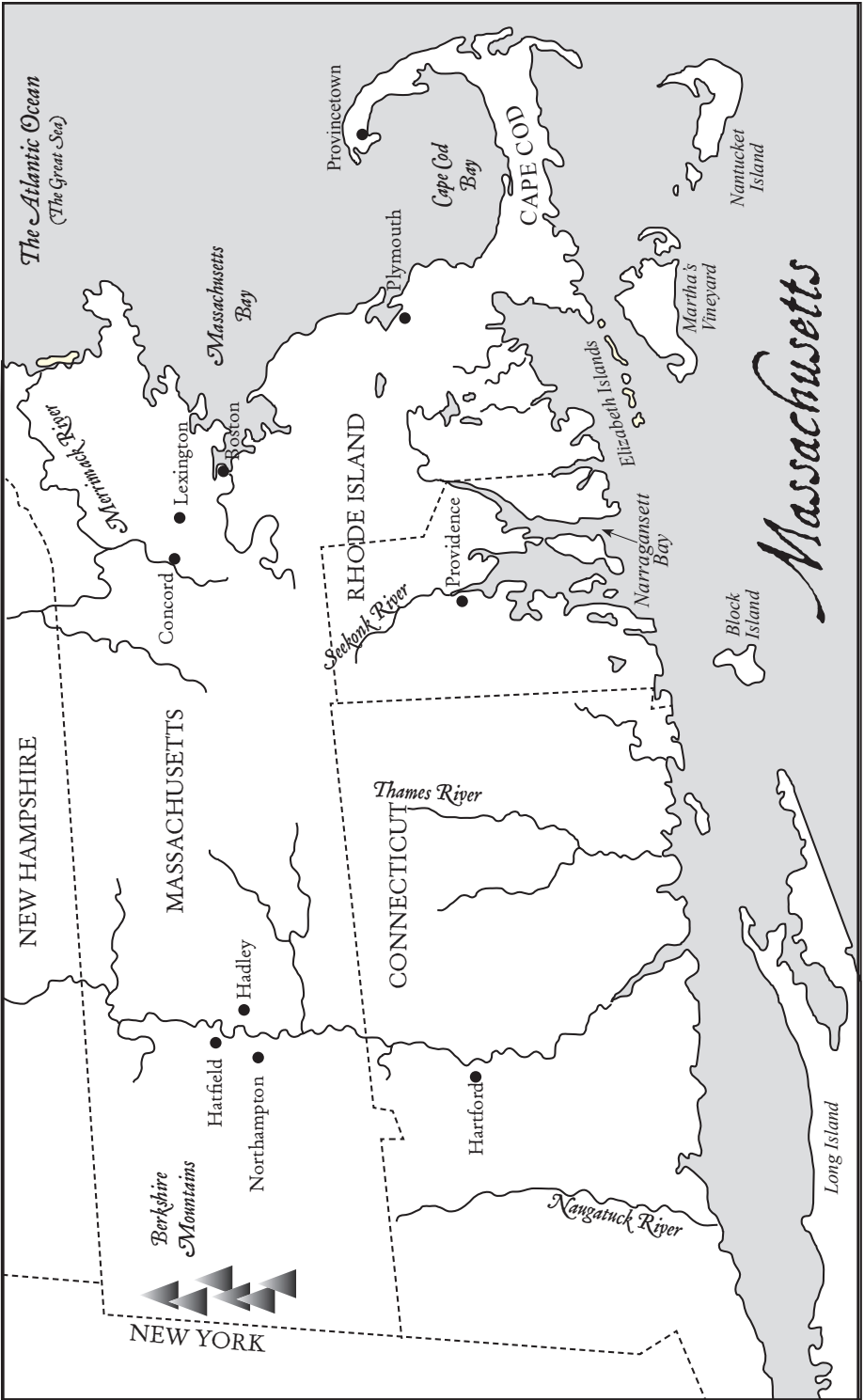
*Rachel Walker Revere*

The Ride of Her Life

1745 - 1813

*by Linda Ann Crosby*





# IV

## *Rachel Walker Revere*

### The Ride of Her Life

by Linda Ann Crosby

*Boston, Province of Massachusetts, New England - Late Summer 1765 -*

*M*other, please do not pull my laces as you did yesterday. Barely could I breathe for my stays were so tight,” lamented Rachel as she held onto the bedpost.

“Nonsense!” said her mother impatiently. “You know how important it is that you look presentable at all times. One never knows when the Lord might put a handsome man in your path.”

Rachel looked heavenward as if questioning God on the same topic. *Why am I still a maid at the age of twenty?* she wondered. Throughout her life she had been told she was beautiful, with her long, straight nose, high forehead and curly brown hair. Her eyes, her father once observed, “are as large and brown as a cow’s eyes.” This was meant to be a compliment but being compared to a farm animal did not sit well with Rachel. It was indeed a mystery why Rachel Walker was yet unwed, as she was not unbecoming and her neighborliness drew people to her.

## What *Really* Happened in Colonial Times

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Most women Rachel's age were married and having their second and third children by the age of twenty. But Rachel was biding her time between helping her mother tend their home, and assisting her two great aunties who lived in a handsome house once owned by her great-grandfather on Clark's Wharf.

"I am only going to see the Aunts today and no men are ever in that house," Rachel commented. It was true. Aside from Father, the last man to enter that home had been Rachel's one and only suitor. "That man is so frail looking," Rachel had told her father, "I am sure I could swing him around over my head. Really, Father! He is certainly not God's idea of a husband for me." The memory caused Rachel to smile. Her father had not done any matchmaking since then, for now he was preoccupied with the political happenings in Boston.

The presence of British troops was almost non-existent in town. In January, the English Parliament had enacted the Stamp Act in the colonies. The monies collected were supposed to pay the costs for British soldiers stationed in the western frontier. It was odd to Rachel that the people of New England were required to pay a tax to issue and buy the business papers that had for years been free. Ship's papers, marriage licenses, legal documents, newspapers, even playing cards were taxed. The French and Indian War had ended two years ago. Many colonists wondered why troops were still needed near the Appalachian Mountains.

A new society, called the Sons of Liberty, formed to protest England's attempts at governing New England without any input from the colonies. 'Taxation without representation' was the new phrase being passed along the streets of Boston. Samuel Adams was the founder of this new society. Their purpose was to raise the awareness of the colonists that their liberties were being taken away by England.

The Distributor of Stamps for Massachusetts was Andrew Oliver.

As the king's representative, he was the target of the first act of the Sons of Liberty. A scarecrow of sorts was made in the image of Mr. Oliver and was hung in a large elm tree. The episode lasted all day, gathering a crowd that intimidated the officers who were ordered to remove the display. A commotion at dusk drew Rachel out of doors into the warm evening air to see a huge multitude taking down the exhibit. Many politicians, tradesmen and artisans belonging to the Sons of Liberty led the crowd. Among them Rachel recognized Samuel Adams, Paul Revere and John Hancock. Rachel knew these men as upstanding leaders in society. They passed through the streets chanting, "Liberty, Property, and No Stamps."

Samuel Adams, a man of forty-three years, conducted business in town. He was a newly elected member of the Massachusetts legislature. Samuel was married to a woman named Elizabeth and had two children.

Paul Revere was a silversmith, engraver and dentist who lived in a house owned by Dr. Clark, right next door to Rachel's Aunts' home on the wharf. He was not a tall man but his shoulders were as broad as a bull's. At the age of thirty-one, Mr. Revere was married and had several children, maybe four, that Rachel had seen playing in the garden behind their home.

John Hancock, at twenty-eight years, was the most eligible bachelor in Boston. He was a tall, thin, flashy man, who wore lavender suits of silk and satin. His rags to riches upbringing was a favorite story for wagging chins. John was an orphan, adopted by a rich uncle who had a shipping empire. He worked beside his uncle in the family business. When Rachel was fifteen John had been the talk of the town, for he was sent on a business mission to England and witnessed the crowning of George III, the King of England. Sadly, only three years later, his uncle passed away. At that time John inherited the largest fortune in New

## What *Really* Happened in Colonial Times

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England.

Rachel took pride in being a British subject and loved to hear of their new young king. George III became king at the age of twenty-two after the death of his grandfather. Stories drifted across the waters to the colonies that George III had chosen a princess from Germany to be his wife. Her name was Princess Charlotte of Mecklenburg and she was a mere sixteen-years-old. The King had arranged the whole wedding, including Charlotte's dress, tiara and eleven attendants. It sounded so romantic to loveless Rachel, and at the same time made her feel like an old maid at twenty.

Rachel didn't understand why so many in Boston were in an uproar about a few taxes Parliament had imposed. Hopefully all the hubbub would die down and life in New England would continue as it had.

*- Early Spring 1770 -*

With dismal skies outside, Rachel lit an oil lamp next to her dressing table in order to see her reflection in the small oval mirror. She was brushing out her mass of curls and relishing the view from the second story of her great Aunts' home on Clark's Wharf. Rachel truly loved watching the endless activities of the bustling port populated by 16,000 people. Even at the age of twenty-five, she marveled at how childlike she was, fascinated by the colorful sights, clamoring sounds and fishy smells of the wharf.

From this very window, in February, Rachel watched as Mr. Revere, his wife Sara, the elder Mrs. Revere and their now six children, move out of the cozy house next door. Rachel noticed that Mrs. Revere was indeed about to have their seventh child, and they certainly needed more elbow room. They purchased a one-hundred-year-old frame home

for their growing family on North Square. It wasn't more than three blocks away, but she would miss seeing the children playing and Mrs. Revere hanging her dish towels on the gooseberry bushes in the yard.

North Square was an unusual name for the triangular shaped clearing that housed one of the town pumps, a market and a guardhouse in the center of Boston. It was a well-to-do and respectable part of town, consisting of neatly kept small homes, most adjoining their neighbors. There were picket fences bordering trimmed yards, shop signs advertising all sorts of wares and services as well as the 'Old North Meeting' which was the 'church of the Mathers.' Four generations of Mather ministers had graced the pulpit, and it was the worship hall of choice for many Puritan families in Boston.

Snow had been heavily falling all day and Rachel stayed near the large, brick fireplace in her aunt's kitchen working on her third cross-stitch sampler. Most girls barely tied the final knot on their first sampler before they were married. Rachel's skill with a needle and thread had certainly improved since her initial sampler, and she took pleasure in turning the colorful threads into delicate letters, numbers and a flowered border. In between stitches, Rachel's time was spent tending the reflector oven by turning the crank until the roast duck was cooked all around. She eventually put the duck in the brazier to keep it hot until dinnertime.

Rachel, her father and mother, and the two aunts ate dinner late that evening and lingered at the large, roughly hewn wooden table discussing the changes in and around Boston. At 9:00 p.m. the church bells began ringing an alarm from the surrounding churches. Rachel's father instructed them to stay in the house while he hastily threw on his coat followed by his heavy black great coat. As he departed, Rachel heard gunfire, several shots being fired in a burst. The women huddled together

## What *Really* Happened in Colonial Times

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near the fireplace, praying that their husband, nephew and father would return unharmed.

At 10:15 p.m. Rachel's father burst through the door with dismay written on his face. "There was a mob scene in front of the Customs House on King Street," he got out between breaths. "They began harassing the soldier on guard, throwing snowballs, stones, and pieces of wood." As he peeled off layers of outerwear, he continued. "He called for help and nine fully armed sentry came scurrying to his aid. The people continued to throw snowballs and rocks. In the commotion 'Fire!' was heard and the soldiers began shooting at the townspeople." In shock, all four women drew their hands to their faces. "Blood covered the snow. Four men fell dead on the spot, one was a colored man, and five more were hurt."

"Were the soldiers arrested?" Rachel asked.

"Not yet, but from the cries of the townspeople, justice will prevail," her father reassured her.

The following week the soldiers were indeed kept in jail awaiting trial. Rachel saw firsthand the entire scene in a print from a copper engraving by Paul Revere. It showed the red-coated soldiers lined up and firing their weapons into the crowd. Captain Preston was depicted raising his sword as if to yell, "Fire!" Rachel also noticed that all of the men on the ground were white skinned. From her father's report, she knew that one of the men was a dark skinned man. It was apparent that Mr. Revere's engraving was not entirely truthful and had been designed to make the most of the massacre. The shooting was bad enough and Rachel did not see the need to capitalize on it. However, the Sons of Liberty desired to raise the awareness of the colonists. England would not let them govern themselves and the regulars would not back down even though there were only 600 redcoats stationed in and around Boston.



- Summer 1773 -

“Why don’t you pick some herbs from the kitchen garden and take them around to the Revere home, Rachel,” her mother suggested. “I’ve heard their baby is not well, and with the passing of their mother, the workload on that grandmother must be immense.”

Rachel adored children and she missed seeing the Revere family playing together and singing songs in their backyard when they had been neighbors. She picked a basket off the mantle and gathered some sprigs of thyme, comfrey, lady’s mantle and bayberries. Rachel didn’t think twice about walking over to their home in her undress. This was not a formal call, and more than likely, Mr. Revere would be at his shop down on the wharf. Her simple cotton day gown with the ruffled lace tucker at her neck would suffice. The wind from the sea caught her sable curls and tugged them free from beneath her mob cap as she walked briskly three blocks uptown.

As Rachel turned the corner off of Fish Street she bumped into someone, scattering her herbs to the ground. She excused her clumsiness and began picking up the stems. She then noticed the gentleman was also gathering her herbs. As they stood, she looked into the eyes of Paul Revere. Immediately she was conscious of her casual attire and took notice of her billowing curls, trying unsuccessfully to tuck them back in.

“Miss Walker, where are you headed in such haste?” he asked.

“Your house.... I heard that your baby ...mother said the herbs.... not expect to see you.... the shop and ...” Rachel stammered tongue-tied and flustered.

Paul found this comical and was restraining himself from a full smile. “I’ve just come from home, but why don’t I escort you back there to make certain you don’t bowl over any more good townsfolk.”

## What *Really* Happened in Colonial Times

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Rachel went right to work setting the kitchen straight in the Revere home. Paul had aptly trained daughters that were carrying on in their mother's absence. Sensing their need to be commended and encouraged, Rachel lovingly offered both. Her next task was administering the herbs, which had been boiled into a tea, for baby Isanna. She would take a sip or two from the silver sucking bottle before turning her head in protest. Rachel's heart sank. After making sure the family was set for their evening meal, Rachel tramped home burying her thoughts in her own meal preparations.

Paul Revere, on the other hand, was consumed with the lovely Rachel Walker. The following day at his silversmith shop, instead of designing a tea set that had been ordered by a British officer, the memory of a dark-haired beauty kept interfering with his work. The fire in the forge crackled and hissed. His apprentices, along with his son Paul, hammered away at the silver pieces they were shaping. But Paul was oblivious to the noise. He could not get Rachel out of his mind. Conversation with her came easily after her initial embarrassment vanished, and she had a cheerful disposition. Having seven children to raise, along with his elderly mother in his home, Paul was indeed in search of a new wife. Would Rachel be willing to marry a man nine years her senior with a house full of children? Paul prayed it so. Thus distracted, he wrote a poem on the back of a bill for mending a spoon, using clues to parts of Rachel's name. It read:

*Take three fourths of a Paine that makes Traitors confess (Rac, or rack)  
With three parts of a place which the Wicked don't Bless (hell)  
Joyne four sevenths of an Exercise which shop-keepers use (walk)  
And what Bad men do, when they good actions refuse (er, or err)  
These four added together with great care and Art  
Will point out the Fair One nearest my Heart.*

As Paul began making appearances at the Walker's home morning, afternoon and evening, his care and concern for Rachel became apparent. Her father lovingly chided Rachel one evening, "Mr. Revere doesn't appear to be the type of man that you could swing around over your head." Paul was indeed a man of solid stature for which Rachel was thankful. Rachel returned his affections and, to the delight of the entire Walker family, consented to become Mrs. Paul Revere. Although the Reveres were members of Boston's New Brick Church, the marriage vows were repeated in October under a cool, but cloudless sky, guided by Reverend Samuel Mather from the Old North Meeting.

The dream of being a wife and mother materialized for Rachel with two simple words, "I do." She was thrust into the care and keeping of an extremely busy household. Rachel was grateful for the assistance of Paul's eldest daughters, the guidance of her new stepmother, Deborah, and the loving and deepening relationship with her new husband.

Shortly after they were wed, sorrow filled the Revere home as they laid little Isanna in the ground next to her mother's grave. The death was heartbreaking for Rachel as the child had clung to her as if she were her birth mother.

Rachel admired Paul's dedication to being home each evening so he could sit around the dinner table with his family, and then spend the evening with 'his lambs' until they were all tucked into bed. This heartwarming time should have made Rachel's heart sing, yet it grew to be the most frustrating time of her day. For as soon as the last child was kissed good night, Paul would leave until the wee hours of the morning. She became quietly reserved as evening approached, lips tentatively pressed into a firm line, her gentle mannerisms brisk, even slightly harsh. What had been unknown to her before their wedding, Rachel

## What *Really* Happened in Colonial Times

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soon discovered. Paul was an active member, not only of the Sons of Liberty, but also of the Masonic Lodge, as well as the Committee of Correspondence. His nighttime engagements were secret meetings for the cause of liberty.

During their brief courting and in the first weeks of marriage, Paul would drive Rachel out to the Blue Hills of Milton, over to Cambridge, to Roxbury and to Watertown with his sorrel mare. These were Rachel's first journeys outside of her port town. She relished the expansive fields of the countryside, the plethora of green hues in the trees so lacking in Boston, and the magenta and crimson wildflowers. One afternoon, while driving back from Cambridge, Rachel expressed her displeasure at his increasing nightly absences. The previous evening had been particularly vexing as he had only come home at the first hint of dawn. She soon discovered that her husband was the first choice of the Committee of Correspondence for the hardest rides throughout the thirteen colonies. His role of informing each province's leaders was vital to the unity of the colonies.

"How will each province know what the British are about if I do not ride?" Paul asked Rachel as a response to her questioning his involvement. "I need to deliver the writings from the committees so the representatives can jointly resist British rule."

"I apologize for seeming disrespectful, Paul," Rachel answered as she moved closer to him on the carriage seat. "I'm concerned for your safety."

Wrapping his free arm around her, Paul said, "My dear, I'm known by the Brits as a silversmith and engraver. Both give me reason to travel, delivering to customers. The officers let me pass without as much as my name and calling."

Rachel's fears were put to rest, not only by his words, but also

by the tenderness of his embrace. She was beginning to understand the depth of Paul's conviction for New England's freedom from the mother country.

~ December 1773 ~

Rachel helped thirteen-year-old Paul Jr. place the cumbersome pail of snow by the fireplace where it would melt, providing much needed water. Severe weather, with blasting snow storms and frostbitten wind, slapped Boston much like the British taxes. The restricting climate limited Paul's rides, for which Rachel was grateful. Unfortunately, the cold did not force Paul indoors. His missions in the night were steady.

"Where in this freezing town do you go so late at night?"

Rachel's voice seemed small from where she was snuggled beneath quilts on their feather tick.

Paul grinned at the sight of his wife. "To the Green Dragon, my love, to meet with likeminded men who want freedom for their families too." The tavern was owned by St. Andrew's Masonic Lodge, where Paul was a member, and was a central meeting place for patriots from all levels of society. Of stately brick structure, the lodge was suitably named for an ornate, copper dragon hanging on a pole above the entry.

"What was the tavern called before the copper dragon turned green?" Rachel coyly teased from her warm nest.

Paul paused from readying himself for bed. His forefinger and thumb stroked his broad chin as he replied, "I have never considered the initial days of the copper dragon, Rachel." The twinkle in his eye gleamed at her, reflecting the candlelight from the nightstand. "I shall bring that question forward next meeting when Sam Adams asks if there are any pressing measures to discuss."

The camaraderie between husband and wife increased daily

## What *Really* Happened in Colonial Times

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that first winter, as did the frost on the window panes. Late into the night, in the privacy of their bedroom, Paul would share with Rachel the restrictions and unfair demands handed down to the colonies from Parliament. As she absorbed her husband's words and opinions, Rachel's own sense of independence from England was growing. She was relieved when many taxes were repealed, yet didn't comprehend why Paul insisted that the wee tax on tea was intolerable.

“Resisting our much loved tea is purely a matter of proving a point to England. Rachel, we do not need their governing and will not buy their tea, no matter how small the amount of taxation.”

Sipping a cup of English tea was as precious to Rachel as a moment of solitude in her home, filled as it was with children. However, she would stand with Paul on his decisions and go without tea as soon as her stores were depleted. A few days following their discussion, there were only enough leaves for a final pot in the Revere household. Rachel readied the teapot and gathered everyone around the table. “Children, this is the last cup of tea you will get for a long time,” she regretfully told them as she poured. Each one savored the warmth and goodness down to the final sip.

In mid-December, the *Dartmouth* pulled into Griffin's Wharf brimming with chests full of tea from the British East India Company. The colonists rallied together to guard the ship, not allowing it to be unloaded. They hoped to force its return to England, hulls still laden with tea. On the twentieth day in port, the cargo was scheduled to be seized by customs officers and sold at auction if the ship did not unload or depart. While the entire town counted down the days to seizure, two more tea ships arrived, amplifying the tension. The Sons of Liberty met to discuss the embargo and the looming deadline.

The skies were coal-black and the air frigid on the nineteenth eve

from the Dartmouth's dropping anchor in the harbor. Rachel was tidying the last of dinner when Paul asked her the most ridiculous question.

"My dear, could you please fill a small pot with some soot for me? And do you have any grease left from the chicken you prepared?"

"Next thing I know you will request the feathers I plucked from the bird as well!" Rachel's eyes were wider than usual.

"You're right. What a grand idea," agreed Paul.

"If you are serious, Mr. Revere, you have some explaining to do... and promptly."

"Rachel," he came to her and held her hands in his. "I'll tell you anything you desire; only you will have to wait for my return. Now, the soot and grease, please."

Paul gathered his requests, a hatchet, and a red blanket before Rachel watched him slip out on his mysterious mission. She settled into the worn rocker by the smoldering fire to mend some garments. Rachel did not realize the depth of her fatigue, and soon she rested her curly head back against the chair, arms limp and eyes shut.

The SLAM of the door startled her, causing her to bolt from the chair. Fear gripped her heart as, in the dim light, she discerned the shape of an Indian in her kitchen. Rachel was speechless. The intruder was fiercely painted with war stripes and feathers sporadically dangled from his hair.

"No need to fear, my dear," came a calming, familiar voice. "It is I, Paul."

Never had Rachel been so relieved to see her husband, despite his ridiculous appearance. Paul removed the blanket wrapped around his shoulders and proceeded to retell the night's events as Rachel sat silently shaking her head.

"It was brilliant, my dear!" he said with a bubbling, child-like







excitement. "There were three groups of fifty men, all dressed as foolish as myself. We boarded the ships and whacked the tea chests open with hatchets and poured the tea into Boston Harbor. All 342 chests were emptied. You should have seen it, Rach. There were thousands of people watching silently from the surrounding wharves. It was a marvelous plan to show England that we will not stand for taxes!" Paul could barely contain himself as he paced the floor in a gleeful caper.

"Well, I never!" was all Rachel kept repeating, while shaking her head in disbelief. Her husband was acting like a ten-year-old boy who had just coated the neighbor's cat with wheel grease and escaped without being caught. She could only imagine 149 other grown men dressed like Indians in their kitchens telling the same tale to bewildered wives at this late hour.

Early the next morning there was a knock on the door by a young lad with a message from Samuel Adams. The Committee had written briefs of the Tea Party and Paul was requested to immediately deliver them to Hartford, New York and Philadelphia. Young Paul was swiftly out the back door to the stall to ready Paul's horse. Rachel slumped in a chair at the kitchen table, knowing that Paul would be gone in a matter of minutes. The 350 miles to Philadelphia, with frozen drifts on the paths, would keep him away for as many as sixteen days... and Christmas was next week. She could not even lift her eyes to meet Paul's as her disappointment settled in like an unwelcome guest. Her first married Christmas would be spent without her dear husband. Paul engulfed her in an embrace showing his love and concern. He kissed her briefly, as he had all the children and his mother. The family watched as Paul slipped into his surtout, boots and buckled on his metal spurs. He promised to return as promptly as possible and burst out the door into winter.

## What *Really* Happened in Colonial Times

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~ April 1775 ~

Rachel slowly grew accustomed to Paul's rapid departures, though, in her opinion, his trips were poorly timed. They interfered with family matters, especially the birth of their first child, Joshua, born last December. Little Joshua was but two days old when Paul was sent to New Hampshire. Rachel did not complain to Paul, or to the children. She missed him terribly, but anticipated his joyous returns.

Anxiety in Boston was a pall in the minds of patriots and British alike. General Thomas Gage, the colonial governor of Massachusetts, had been promoted to Commander in Chief of the British forces in America, a grand title for a man who only controlled redcoats in Boston. General Gage ordered fortifications to be built across "the neck," the single land route out of Boston to the mainland. As hostilities rose, he sent a request to England for 20,000 reinforcements for his troops. In response, England instructed him to arrest Samuel Adams and John Hancock, hoping to subdue "the rowdies."

The Sons of Liberty had taken on the nighttime vigil of spying on the British soldiers to glean information about possible movements or attacks. During a nightly expedition, one of the members learned of a plan for the troops to leave Boston and head to Concord where the colonists had a store of ammunition and weapons. Another member heard of the warrant for Adams' and Hancock's arrest.

Paul knew the British would depart under cover of night, so he met with Robert Newman, a rector in Old North Church. Their belfry was the tallest in Boston and could even be seen from Charleston, across the river. If the British left Boston over the neck, he was to hang one lantern in the tower. If they crossed the Charleston River, two lanterns would be the signal.

Dr. Joseph Warren, a fellow Mason and the interim leader for

the Sons of Liberty, gathered the incoming information and decided to send two messengers to warn Adams and Hancock in Lexington. Then they were sent on to alert Concord. The patriots were ready if the troops made a move.

There was a fitful wind blowing the night of April 18<sup>th</sup> when General Gage ordered the movement to Concord. The familiar knock sounded on the Revere's door late in the night. Paul told Rachel it was business for the Sons of Liberty and was away in an instant. As soon as he was out of doors, he saw two lanterns blazing in the belfry of Old North. The British were crossing by sea!

In the quietness of the night, Rachel prayed for Paul's safety as she drifted back to sleep. As the sun's rays filtered between the shutters of Rachel's window in the morning, she was awakened by the soft coos of baby Joshua in the cradle at the foot of the bed. She wondered why Paul had not returned from the Green Dragon. She called for Paul Jr., and asked him to check if their horse was still in the stall behind the house. Paul Jr. returned in an instant, "Yes, Mum, she's in her stall, but Papa didn't feed her this morning."

"Please see to it, son." Rachel requested. "Your father must be on important business."

All day Rachel wondered where her husband had ventured without his trusted horse. Young Paul went to his father's silversmith shop and learned from fellow apprentices of a battle at Lexington between minutemen and the British. He was breathless after he ran home to tell Rachel the news. That night the sun slid behind the hills and the evening sky darkened to ink, yet no word came from Paul.

It was past noon the following day when Dr. Benjamin Church arrived at the Revere home with grave news. Dr. Church was a member of the Committee of Correspondence. "Mrs. Revere, I'm afraid your

## What *Really* Happened in Colonial Times

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husband will not be returning to Boston,” he spoke solemnly. “He was arrested two nights ago, but was released unhurt. There was a terrible battle with many wounded. I have returned to Boston to secure medicine for the soldiers and Paul asked that you send him money so that he may board with a family in Cambridge.”

Paul’s mother gathered a piece of parchment, an ink well and quill and instructed Rachel to write a note to Paul. Meanwhile, Deborah sent Paul Jr. to the shop for the cash box while she collected hidden money from various places throughout the house. Rachel sat at the kitchen table and penned,

My dear, by Doctor Church I send a hundred and twenty-five pound & beg you will take the best care of yourself & not attempt coming into this towne again & if I have an opportunity of coming or sending out anything or any of the children I shall do it. Pray keep up your spirits & trust yourself & us in the hands of a good God who will take care of us. Tis all my dependence, for vain is the help of man.  
Adieu my love. From your Affectionate, R. Revere.

Rachel and the family did not hear from Paul again for weeks. News eventually arrived that Paul was employed as an express rider for Massachusetts, and had arranged to house his family in Watertown. During this time, Rachel worked diligently at securing a pass for them to leave Boston. She eventually bribed a British officer with two bottles of beer, a bottle of wine, veal and beef. In return, the family was free to depart. Paul had instructed Paul Jr. to stay behind and secure the business and the house, while Rachel, Deborah and the six children left over the neck in an overflowing cart.

It was early May when Paul was reunited with Rachel and his family. Paul hugged and kissed each one and then repeated the affections a second time. Once again, Rachel sat in amazement, while her animated husband recounted his ride of April 18<sup>th</sup>.

“Dr. Warren sent me across the Charleston River to Lexington and to Concord. I alerted all the houses I passed that the regulars were approaching. I dodged two mounted soldiers just outside Charleston Common. I rode like the wind, my love,” Paul bragged, as Rachel adored him with her shining dark eyes. “It was midnight when I arrived at Reverend Clarke’s home to warn Sam and John to be off. You should have seen John’s Aunt, Lydia Hancock, fly into high hysterics at the news, shaking her hands and running in tiny circles. She would have fainted from fright if John had not settled her.” He laughed at the thought.

“William Dawes was also sent to warn John and Sam, and he got through over the neck. When he arrived in Lexington, the warning was sounding for the minutemen to assemble on the green. There were repeated gunshots, beating of drums and the ringing of bells. As soon as Dawes rested his horse, we were off to Concord, joined by a fine young doctor named Samuel Prescott. Shortly after, we were surrounded by sentry, but Dr. Prescott is such an excellent rider that he jumped a stone wall and was off. I made for the woods, but was overtaken and forced to dismount. While the soldiers questioned me, Dawes escaped and ventured on to Concord behind the doctor.”

“Did they harm you, dear?” Her eyes scanned his body for evidence.

“One of the soldiers rapped me on the head with the butt of his rifle.” His hand rose to touch the still tender spot. “But I’m fine, Rachel.”

## What *Really* Happened in Colonial Times

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“The redcoats heard the commotion in Lexington and hastened away, leaving me to walk to town. I arrived at the Clarke parsonage around 3:00 a.m. and you will not believe what I found!” Paul hesitated, waiting for Rachel to guess. She did not utter a word, so he continued. “Sam and John were still there, arguing over whether or not they should leave!”

“I hurried them off in a carriage while the battle began on the green. It was horrible, Rachel. There were 75 militia against hundreds and hundreds of British troops. Eight of our men fell dead and ten more were wounded before dispersing.” Paul sobered as he reported of the battle.

“The British moved on to Concord, where they met 300 patriots and were forced to withdraw. As they marched back to Boston, colonists fired at them from behind barns, bridges and trees. Many British were also killed. It was a horrific scene.”

“That night, I feared that I might never see you again. I am relieved to have you, mother and the children here safely.” Paul admired his wife as he held her. “Don’t fret, my dear. You will soon feel secure in the countryside away from the troops in Boston.”

Rachel rested in her husband’s arms at his reassuring words before turning her attention to settling her family in their new surroundings.

*- Epilogue -*

Paul and Rachel Revere had eight children of their own, five who lived to adulthood. Together, they raised all eleven. Paul never did receive the monies or the letter Rachel sent with Dr. Church, as the doctor turned out to be an informant for General Gage. Following his midnight ride, Paul was in the Massachusetts militia as a lieutenant

colonel of artillery. He started a powder mill to aid the colonists in the Revolutionary War. After the war, he continued to manufacture gold and silver wares. Along with this, he also opened the first copper plating mill in America, built a foundry where metal bells were cast, and opened a small hardware store. Paul retired from active work at 76 years old, still surrounded by his children, grandchildren, and great-grandchildren. Rachel passed away at the age of 68, five years before Paul died, in 1818, at the age of 83. The *Boston Intelligence* carried an obituary for Paul stating, "Seldom has the tomb closed upon a life so honorable and useful."

To this day, each year on April 18<sup>th</sup>, two lanterns are hung in the Old North Church by a descendant of either Paul Revere or Robert Newman, to commemorate his famous ride.

*About the Author:*



Linda Ann Crosby is an author, speaker, wife and homeschooling mother of three. She has written a devotional book for moms, encouraging them to laugh in the midst of it all. She has also contributed to unit studies on Africa and Indians for the Konos curriculum. She leads a mentoring ministry at her church and escapes to scrapbooking retreats whenever possible. Linda and her husband Rick spent the first ten years of their marriage in Northern Canada but have made their home in Phoenix, Arizona since 1997.