

Paul Revere's Ride

By: Henry Wadsworth Longfellow



Paul Revere's Ride by Henry Wadsworth Longfellow is one poem that just has to accompany a study on Paul Revere. It is such a fun poem to read aloud!

Included here is the full poem, questions which require the student to use quotations from the poem to answer, and the answers.

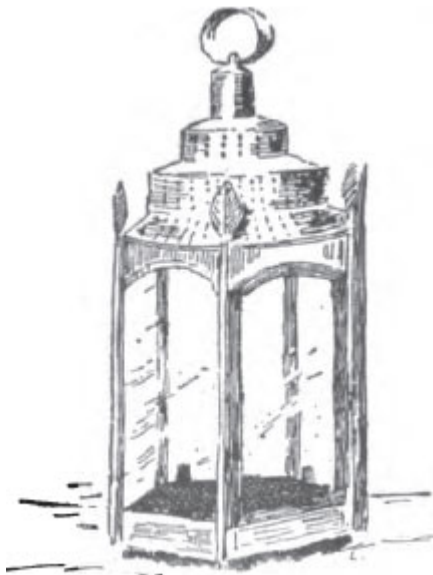
I hope that these pages will add value to your study on Paul Revere.

Blessings,
Cynthia

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"Paul Revere's Ride"

[APRIL 18-19, 1775]

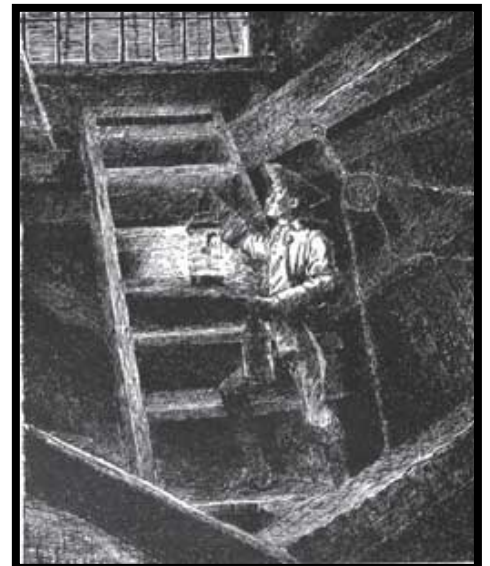
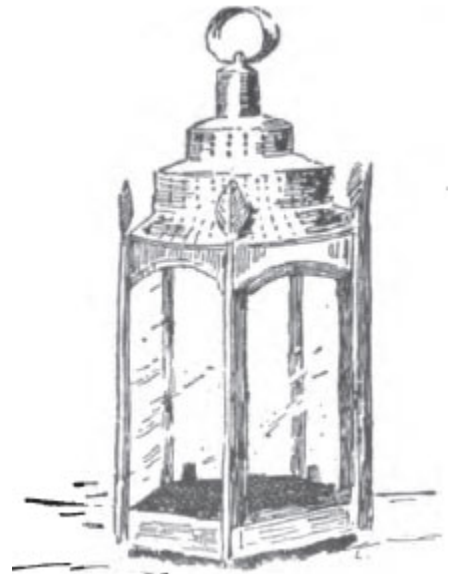
LISTEN, my children, and you shall hear
Of the midnight ride of Paul Revere,
On the eighteenth of April, in seventy-five;
Hardly a man is now alive
Who remembers that famous day and year.

He said to his friend, "If the British march
By land or sea from the town to-night,
Hang a lantern aloft in the belfry arch
Of the North Church tower as a signal light, —
One, if by land, and two, if by sea;
And I on the opposite shore will be,
Ready to ride and spread the alarm
Through every Middlesex village and farm,
For the country folk to be up and to arm."

Then he said, "Good night!" and with muffled oar
Silently rowed to the Charlestown shore,
Just as the moon rose over the bay,
Where swinging wide at her moorings lay
The Somerset, British man-of-war;
A phantom ship, with each mast and spar
Across the moon like a prison bar,
And a huge black hulk, that was magnified
By its own reflection in the tide.

Meanwhile, his friend, through alley and street,
Wanders and watches with eager ears,
Till in the silence around him he hears'
The muster of men at the barrack door,
The sound of arms, and the tramp of feet,
And the measured tread of the grenadiers,
Marching down to their boats on the shore.

Then he climbed the tower of the Old North Church
By the wooden stairs, with stealthy tread,
To the belfry-chamber overhead,
And startled the pigeons from their perch
On the sombre rafters, that round him made
Masses and moving shapes of shade,—



By the trembling ladder, steep and tall,
To the highest window in the wall,
Where he paused to listen and look down
A moment on the roofs of the town,
And the moonlight flowing over all.

Beneath in the churchyard, lay the dead,
In their night-encampment on the hill,
Wrapped in silence so deep and still
That he could hear, like a sentinel's tread,
The watchful night-wind, as it went
Creeping along from tent to tent,
And seeming to whisper, "All is well!"
A moment only he feels the spell
Of the place and the hour, and the secret dread
Of the lonely belfry and the dead;
For suddenly all his thoughts are bent
On a shadowy something far away,
Where the river widens to meet the bay,—
A line of black that bends and floats
On the rising tide, like a bridge of boats.

Meanwhile, impatient to mount and ride,
Booted and spurred, with a heavy stride
On the opposite shore walked Paul Revere.
Now he patted his horse's side,
Now gazed at the landscape far and near,
Then, impetuous, stamped the earth,
And turned and tightened his saddle-girth;
But mostly he watched with eager search
The belfry-tower of the Old North Church,
As it rose above the graves on the hill,
Lonely and spectral and sombre and still.
And lo! as he looks, on the belfry's height
A glimmer, and then a gleam of light!
He springs to the saddle, the bridle he turns,
But lingers and gazes, till full on his sight
A second lamp in the belfry burns!

A hurry of hoofs in a village street,
A shape in the moonlight, a bulk in the dark,
And beneath, from the pebbles, in passing, a spark
Struck out by a steed flying fearless and fleet:
That was all! And yet, through the gloom and the light,
The fate of a nation was riding that night;



And the spark struck out by that steed, in his flight
Kindled the land into flame with its heat.

He has left the village and mounted the steep,
And beneath him, tranquil and broad and deep,
Is the Mystic, meeting the ocean tides;
And under the alders that skirt its edge,
Now soft on the sand, now loud on the ledge,
Is heard the tramp of his steed as he rides.

It was twelve by the village clock,
When he crossed the bridge into Medford town.
He heard the crowing of the cock,
And the barking of the farmer's dog,
And felt the damp of the river fog,
That rises after the sun goes down.

It was one by the village clock,
When he galloped into Lexington.
He saw the gilded weathercock
Swim in the moonlight as he passed.
And the meeting-house windows, blank and bare,
Gaze at him with a spectral glare,
As if they already stood aghast
At the bloody work they would look upon.

It was two by the village clock,
When he came to the bridge in Concord town.
He heard the bleating of the flock,
And the twitter of birds among the trees,
And felt the breath of the morning breeze
Blowing over the meadows brown.
And one was safe and asleep in his bed
Who at the bridge would be first to fall,
Who that day would be lying dead,
Pierced by a British musket-ball.

You know the rest. In the books you have read,
How the British Regulars fired and fled,—
How the farmers gave them ball for ball,
From behind each fence and farmyard wall,
Chasing the red-coats down the lane,
Then crossing the fields to emerge again
Under the trees at the turn of the road,
And only pausing to fire and load.



So through the night rode Paul Revere;
And so through the night went his cry of alarm
To every Middlesex village and farm,—
A cry of defiance and not of fear,
A voice in the darkness, a knock at the door,
And a word that shall echo forevermore!
For, borne on the night-wind of the Past,
Through all our history, to the last,
In the hour of darkness and peril and need,
The people will waken and listen to hear
The hurrying hoof-beats of that steed,
And the midnight message of Paul Revere.

Henry Wadsworth Longfellow [1807-1882]



Name _____ Date _____

"Paul Revere's Ride"

Questions

Answer using a quotation from the poem.

(1) When did Paul Revere begin his famous ride?

(2) What arrangement did he make with his friend?

(3) What part was Paul Revere to take?

(4) Why?



Name _____ Date _____

(5) How can you picture his friend?

(6) Meanwhile where was Paul Revere?

(7) What was he doing?

(8) Toward what point did he look?



Name _____ Date _____

(9) Did he see anything?

(10) What does he do?

(11) Does he start on his ride?

(12) Where was he at midnight?

(13) When did he reach Lexington?



Name _____ Date _____

(14) What do you know about the *battle* of Lexington?

(15) What can you call "Paul Revere's Ride."



"Paul Revere's Ride"

Answers

- (1) "On the eighteenth of April In Seventy-five."
- (2) He said to his friend,
 "If the British march
 By land or sea from the town to-night,
 Hang a lantern aloft from the belfry-arch
 Of the North Church tower, as a signal-light,—
 One if by land, and two if by sea:"
- (3) He was to be,
 "Ready to ride and spread the alarm
 Through every Middlesex village and farm,"
- (4) "For the country-folk to be up and to arm."
- (5) "Meanwhile his friend, through alley and street,
 Wanders and watches with eager ears,
 Till In the silence around him he hears
 The muster of men at the barrack door," etc.
- (6) "On the opposite shore walked Paul Revere."
- (7) "Now he patted his horse's side,
 Now gazed at the landscape far and near.
 Then impetuous stamped the earth,
 And turned and tightened his saddle-girth;"
- (8) "But mostly he watched with eager search,
 The belfry-tower of the old North Church."
- (9) "A glimmer and then a gleam of light!"
- (10) "He springs to the saddle the bridle he turns,"
- (11) No, he "lingers and gazes, till full on his sight
 A second lamp in the belfry burns."
- (12) "It was twelve by the village clock
 When he crossed the bridge into Medford town."

(13) "It was one by the village clock,
When he galloped into Lexington."

(14) We know,
"How the British regulars fired and fled
How the farmers gave them ball for ball
From behind each fence and farmyard-wall."

(15) "The midnight message of Paul Revere."