

The Road to Revolution

Chapter 4 Section 1

The Road to Revolution

Main Idea

A series of increasingly restrictive laws angered many American colonists, leading to rebellion against Britain.

Reading Focus

- Why did Great Britain pass new laws in America?
- How did the colonists respond to the new laws? How did their response lead to even stricter measures?
- Why did the First Continental Congress meet?
- What was the significance of the battles at Lexington and Concord?

Britain Passes New Laws

Grenville and the Sugar Act

- French and Indian War left Britain with large debt. British army of 10,000 was left in the colonies.
- England said the army was to protect the colonists, but the colonists thought the soldiers were there to intimidate them.
- Prime Minister Grenville wanted colonists to pay for British troops through the Sugar Act, which taxed sugar and molasses imported from the French and Spanish West Indies.
- Northern merchants felt this would hurt rum trade. Other colonists resented taxation without representation in Parliament.



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- Army of 10,000 still in colonies
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- Sugar Act taxed sugar and molasses
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- Others resented taxation without representation

Britain Passes New Laws

The Stamp Act brings protests

- Parliament passed the Stamp Act as another way to bring in money from the colonies.
- Required a government tax stamp on certain documents: contracts and licenses, newspapers, almanacs, printed sermons, and playing cards
- Colonists protested openly.
- **Stamp Act Congress** organized by the Massachusetts Assembly to send a petition to the king and Parliament
- Sons of Liberty, made up of unskilled workers, artisans, small farmers, merchants, and lawyers, organized boycott of British goods and put pressure on merchants who did not join the boycott.
- Stamp Act repealed after British merchants saw sales drop because of the boycotts

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Townshend Acts

- Taxed lead, paint, paper, glass, and tea that were imported from Britain
- Brought back **writs of assistance**, which were written orders that allowed customs officers the right to search colonial homes for smuggled goods

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The Colonists Respond

The Boston Massacre

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- Most of the Townshend Acts were repealed in March 1770, except for tea tax.



- In Boston, where tensions were already high, colonists began throwing snowballs at a British sentry guarding the customs house. After British soldiers arrived to help, they fired into the crowd, killing five.
- Samuel Adams introduced the idea of Committees of Correspondence to spread the news of British injustices from colony to colony.
 - Became basis of a political network to unify the colonies



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The Colonists Respond

- Colonial boycotts left a British tea company with millions of pounds of unsold tea. The Tea Act (1773) enabled the company to sell tea directly to colonists.
- Many colonists did not buy the tea.
- In December 1773 about 70 colonists boarded British ships loaded with the tea and dumped it into Boston Harbor.

- Parliament passed the Coercive Acts to punish the rebellious colonists. They were known by the colonists as the Intolerable Acts.
- Closed the port of Boston
- Gave the royal governor more control over Massachusetts
- Imposed more rules for quartering soldiers

- The Quebec Act expanded the province of Quebec southward to the Ohio river and west to the Mississippi.
- The Roman Catholic Church would be legal.
- French Catholics were guaranteed their rights.
- American colonists thought the act limited their chances to live on the western frontier.



The First Continental Congress

September 1774

- Brought colonists together as Americans
- All delegates agreed that Parliament was exerting too much control.
- It issued a Declaration of Rights protesting Great Britain's actions.
- Agreed not to import or use British goods
- Agreed to stop exports to Britain
- Formed a force of minutemen, colonial soldiers who would be ready to resist a British attack with short notice

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The Battles of Lexington and Concord

- Minutemen in Massachusetts were drilling on their village commons and stockpiling gunpowder and weapons.
- British General Gage knew colonial militias were preparing for a conflict.
- In April 1775 King George III ordered Gage to arrest colonial leaders, especially Samuel Adams and John Hancock, and to capture the colonists' gunpowder.
- Colonists' gunpowder was stockpiled in Concord, a town west of Boston.
- On the night of April 17, 1775, 700 British troops left Boston for Concord.

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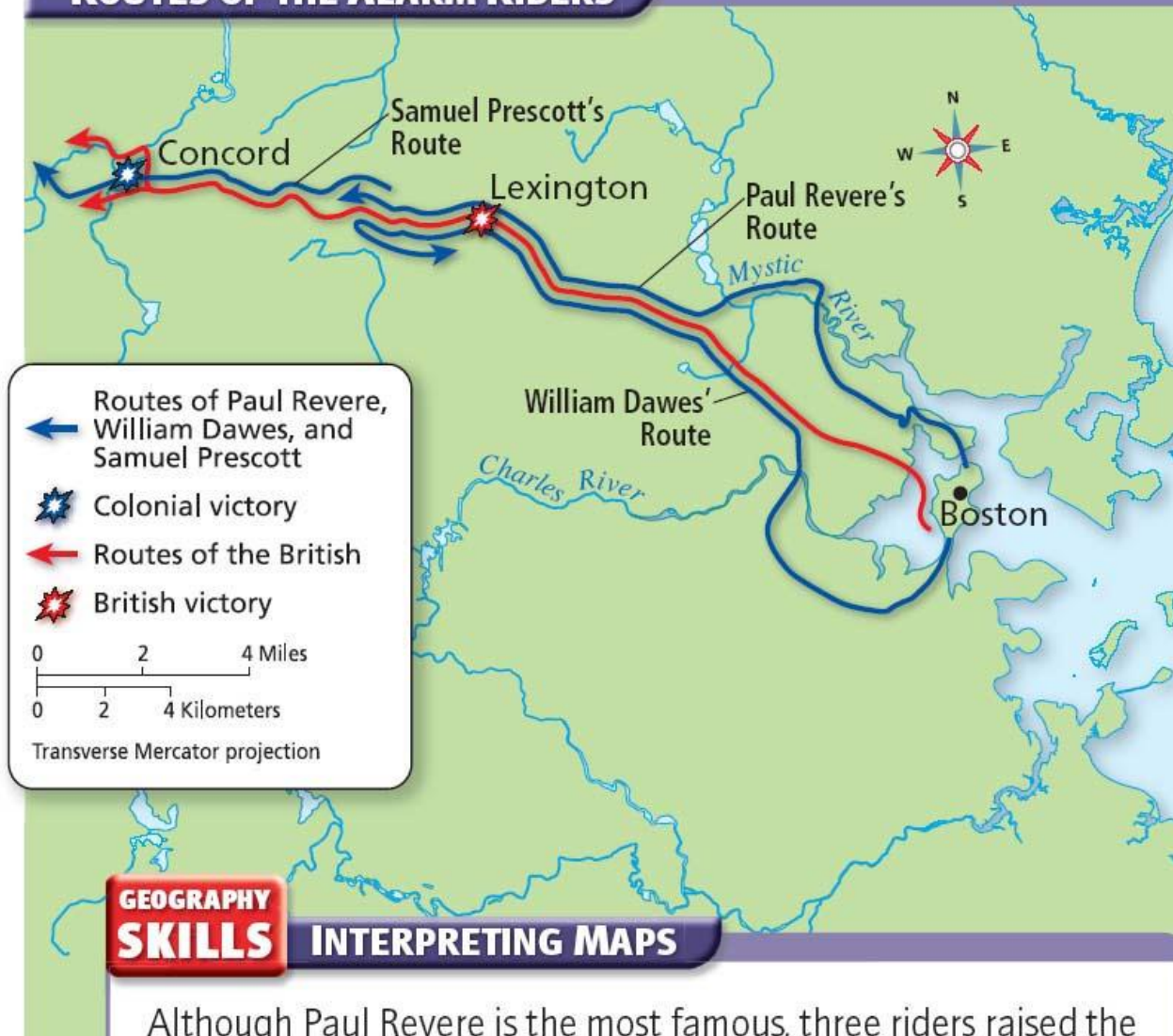
The Battles of Lexington and Concord

- Secret system of alarm riders was in place to warn of any unusual activity of British troops.
- **Paul Revere** and **William Dawes** set off for Lexington to warn Adams and Hancock.
- After warning the leaders, they headed to Concord. **Samuel Prescott**, another alarm rider, met them on the road. Then the British surrounded them and tried to arrest all of them.
- Prescott escaped to warn the minutemen at Concord. Dawes also escaped.
- Revere was captured. When they heard the militia guns, the soldiers let Revere go, but without his horse.

Continued

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ROUTES OF THE ALARM RIDERS



GEOGRAPHY SKILLS

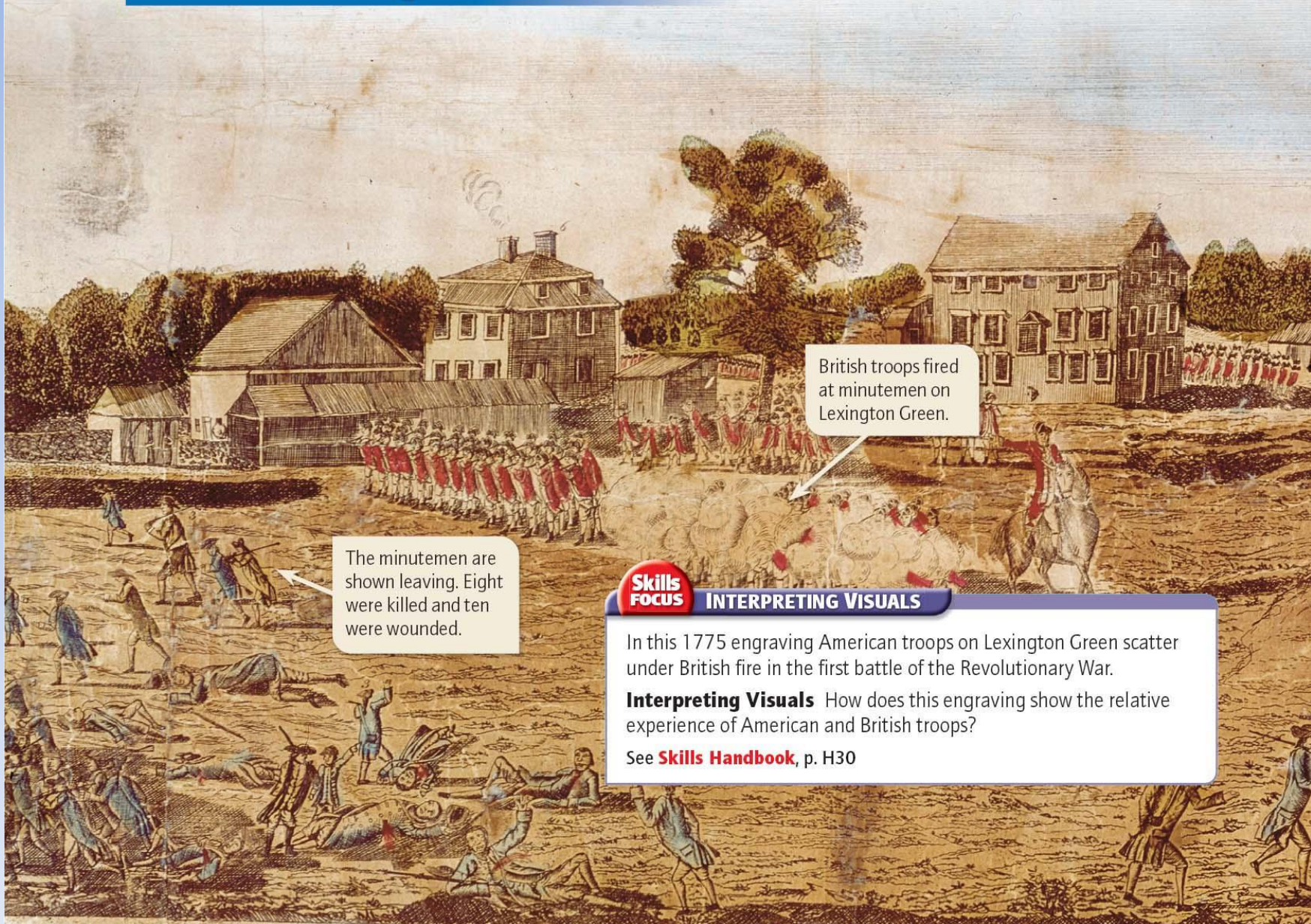
INTERPRETING MAPS

Although Paul Revere is the most famous, three riders raised the alarm that the British soldiers were coming.

Movement Which rider told the minutemen at Concord that the British soldiers were approaching?

See **Skills Handbook**, p. H19

Battle of Lexington



British troops fired at minutemen on Lexington Green.

The minutemen are shown leaving. Eight were killed and ten were wounded.

Skills FOCUS INTERPRETING VISUALS

In this 1775 engraving American troops on Lexington Green scatter under British fire in the first battle of the Revolutionary War.

Interpreting Visuals How does this engraving show the relative experience of American and British troops?

See **Skills Handbook**, p. H30



Lexington & Concord 1775 by Sandham

US Bicentennial 10cents

The Battles of Lexington and Concord

- About 700 armed British soldiers reached **Lexington** to face 70 minutemen.
- British captain ordered them to leave, then the militia was charged.
- Minutemen fled, eight Americans were killed.

- The British went on to Concord where hundreds of minutemen awaited.
- After gunfire was exchanged, the British retreated toward Boston.
- Along the way, the militia fired at the British from under cover.
- At the end of the day, British casualties far outnumbered colonial casualties.



- Americans saw the smoke and came from all over to shoot at the British
- British ambushed at Old North Bridge
- 3000 Patriots waited for the 700 Red Coats to make their return trip to Boston
- American sharpshooters picked off regulars as they marched back to Boston
- Redcoats lost 73 and 200 were wounded
- Quarrel between Brit. & Amer. now war