

William Dawes, Jr. (1745-1799) slab grave
 King's Chapel Burying Ground
 Boston, Suffolk Co.,
 Massachusetts
 Patriot Index / Revolutionary War Graves Register
 Nat'l. Society SAR (NSSAR)
 Louisville, KY, Headquarters
 December 24, 2014

Submitted by James Edward Mitchell, Chairman
 Texas Society SAR RevWar Graves Committee

On the date above, Compatriot Charlie E. Scott, Editor (newsletter) of The Kentucky Pioneer sent along my copy of Vol 10, Issue 10, (pg 15) that arrived upon my doorstep with a small color photograph of the front street entrance of the 'Green Dragon' Tavern at Boston taken previously by Compatriot Tom Geimeier. Charlie, Tom Higgins Past Pres., of the KYSSAR, and, I go back together, through reenacting in colonial clothing to perpetuate our shared American societal beginnings during the Revolutionary War.

This story is shared for the benefit of any NSSAR Compatriot to speak publically and factually about Boston's Seat of Revolution and an American spy cell and first patriot intelligence network on record, known as *the Mechanics*. This group grew out of another organization, *Sons of Liberty* that had successfully formed to oppose the dreaded Stamp Act.

Kenneth A. Daigler's book entitled: Spies, Patriots and Traitors published in 2014 by the Georgetown University Press at WDC, depicts the Boston branch of the '*Sons of Liberty*' over the summer of 1765 as achieving modest success at spreading information and furthering a united political position against the British authorities while, radical more violent street leaders preferred riots, looting, physical destruction of the stamps, and assaults on British stamp agents. In Boston riots were anything but calm organized demonstrations! Daigler wrote that activists enjoyed intimidating local British officials. On Aug 14, 1765, an effigy of Andrew Oliver, the stamp distributor for the City of Boston was hanged in the South End.

During ten years of Stamp Act protest and armed conflict at the battle of Lexington and Concord, the *Sons of Liberty* developed into a powerful and effective organization directing political action throughout the colonies forming chapters in New Hampshire, Boston, MA and, New York City to Charleston, S.C. At Boston, **Samuel Adams** and **James Otis, Jr.** were particularly senior leaders and planners of the group.

Over the duration of the ten years from 1765-1775, the 'Boston Massacre' was sparked in 1770. Among American notable Colonial era publishers opposing harsh British measures directed against mainly the merchant working classes, were the likes of Benj. **Edes** of the *Boston Gazette*, **Wm. Goddard** of the *Providence Journal*, **John Holt** of the *New York Journal*, and **Isaiah Thomas** of the *Massachusetts Spy*. They intermingled and exchanged propaganda using merchants and tradesmen classes requiring the 'hated' stamp (Act) for legal and commercial transactions.

Finally, during 1775 as British general Thomas Gage and his American-born wife, Margaret Kemble Gage resided at Boston -the Seat of Revolution, an American double agent **Benj. Church, M.D. infiltrated** at Boston against his chapter members of *the Mechanics* that met at a city tavern, named "Green Dragon".

Colonial taverns were semi-public meeting places that opened daily before noon catering primarily for the purpose of serving food and refreshment, the exchange of ideas for commerce and business; while, inns were usually reserved for boarding & lodging with service that might reward a short meal.

Gen. Thomas Gage by the fall of 1774 was handsomely paying **Benjamin Church, M.D.** cash for the regular exchange for the names of *Boston's Mechanics* including **Paul Revere**, and also information for particularly **Samuel Adams** and **John Hancock**, considered suspects for the official British indictments for acts of treason.

On the flip side of the American Patriot effort to collect British intelligence by Dec., 1774 **Paul Revere, William Dawes and Samuel Prescott** were serving as riders collecting strategic intelligence directed against two (2) British regiments sent to garrison Fort William and Mary in Portsmouth to secure British black powder and cannon stores. This resulted in the Patriot(s) secretly exchanging confidential military reports *either wittingly or unwittingly* with **Margaret Kemble Gage**, Thomas Gage's lovely and dedicated American wife through family interactions and current gossip.

Also, many Bostonians such as Revere, Dawes and Prescott comprised well-established tradesmen. Their status and cover for action were natural, wrote Kenneth A. Daigler in chapter 3, pg. 54 of his book. Other Bostonian craftsmen, auctioneers and farmers operated long-standing business and trade relationships supplying the British with local goods & fresh supplies of pork, bacon, chicken and beef. Patriots would exchange this trade information monitoring British supply orders, and were able to anticipate future British plans and intentions.

Ultimately, American patriot counter-intelligence techniques prompted **Joseph Warren, M.D.**, Chairman of the Massachusetts Committee of Safety to order **Paul Revere** and **William Dawes** to ride from Boston upon a signal light that was arranged from the Old North Church to Concord about 6 miles from Lexington to inform the Concord (MA) militia to remove the arms supplies from reach by British regulars from Boston to raid the Concord. Also, Warren ordered the patriot riders to find and to warn **John Adams** and **John Hancock** at Lexington on the evening of Apr 18, 1775 that Gen Gage had ordered their arrest, and search for travel voucher payments made by the Massachusetts Provincial Congress's Committee of Safety and, detention if incriminating items of treason were found.

Gage's British Col. Francis Smith departed the Boston Harbor confident that his 800 troops would conduct the forced march to the village of Concord reaching it after midnight with ease and to *secretly* conduct a raid upon the Patriot arms store. All the while, Colonel Smith had within his British woolen uniform jacket a pouch with two arrest warrants bearing the names of **Samuel Adams** and **John Hancock**. His secondary British orders were to locate, search and incarcerate **Paul Revere** if any treasonous papers or payment voucher were recovered.

Results: British **Col. Francis Smith** successfully detained **Paul Revere** and searched him without finding any incriminating evidence to hold him over for trial. **Adams and Hancock** both escaped capture by the British dragnet by soldier horsemen already searching inns and taverns easily found along the Boston turnpike after being warned by **Samuel Prescott and Dawes** that night.

After **Col. Francis Smith** reached the village of Concord, the arms store was found empty! Making the forced march a crucible, it was already getting light that early morning Apr. 19th as the British regular force was surprised returning to Boston at Lexington village green (Common) when encountering seventy (70) Lexington (MA) militiamen and exchanging shots.

By the time the British force was across the Lexington Bridge one (1) soldier was wounded by patriots. The temptation to assault the Massachusetts (MA) militia at Lexington was tempered, when Col. Smith realized his marching column of British wearing wool, red jackets were made easy targets for the local patriot rebels and another ten (10) hour march lay ahead of the British column if they were to return to Boston without relief by a 'trailing' British force.

Lexington (MA) militia Captain John Parker's seventy (70) militiamen included any number of inexperienced militia sharpshooters, younger than age 17 and, he wished them only to shoot at the British *if shot at by the British* and told them so... After defending themselves at the Lexington green and sniping at the fleeing British retreating across the Lexington Bridge, the Patriot ranks swelled with eight (8) dead militiamen and ten (10) wounded!

Historically speaking, after the battle of Lexington village green initially each side vowed the other had fired the first shot. Each side sought to blame the other for the outbreak of armed conflict. The Americans between Concord and Lexington later vied for the honor of having fired that shot! The village of Concord claimed it had begun the first "forcible resistance," asserting that no one at Lexington had fired at the British. Lexington, in turn, claimed the first shots were made by their (MA) militia and this claim would for generations evoke jealous pride and even a lasting feud between townspeople, wrote Stuart A. P. Murray – Smithsonian Question & Answer book entitled: The American Revolution.

William Dawes, Jr. died Feb. 25, 1799 at Boston, MA, and his burial slab grave, appears recorded and photographed online maintained by: Find A Grave Memorial# 1870.

Summary: History is peculiar enough whilst it is openly documented, but for the record of official spying, utilization of tradecraft and political action, the American Revolutionary War record is usually vague. Nevertheless, the facts stand that **Paul Revere's** interrogation and physical search did not reveal any treasonous papers or travel vouchers signed by **Joseph Warren, M.D.**, the Chairman of the Massachusetts Committee of Safety, the night of Revere's stop and detention by **Col. Francis Smith**. In fact the signed voucher by Doctor **Joseph Warren Massachusetts Provincial Congress** to **Paul Revere** for paid expenses as a courier on Apr 18 & 19, 1775 at Boston and Concord was authorized for payment two weeks after his famous ride.

Years after the determination was made by **Gen. Geo. Washington** that his American Surgeon gen. **Benj. Church** had betrayed the Mechanics American spy cell in Boston, a call was voiced loudly that a Patriot of Paul Revere's tradecraft experience should logically on the night of Apr 18, 1775, have signaled that a turncoat was among the Mechanics. The fact of Revere's personal search should easily have identified Benj. Church to Revere, as a well-paid, British double agent for gen Thomas Gage! Revolutionary officials asked Revere, why he failed to suspect his fellow Boston Mechanic, Benj. Church, M.D. had arranged Revere's stop and search!? Revere replied, I knew something was wrong but, I never would allow myself to believe that a trusted friend and fellow Mechanic was a paid British spy. Could Revere also have had cooperating family, neighbors, tradesmen and associates that reported his comings and goings to the British and their contacts? "Logically, we will never know. Yet, consider that when a British paid spy, identified **Margaret Kemble Gage** as suspected of furnishing information on her husband's plans to capture Patriot "Mechanics" in 1775, her husband, gen. Gage subsequently sent her to England away from her American family and gossipy friend(s).