

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 by sea from the town tonight,  
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.

An lo! as he looks, on the belfry's height  
A glimmer, and then a gleam of light!

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.

It was twelve by the village clock,  
When he crossed the bridge into Medford town.

It was one by the village clock,  
When he galloped into Lexington.

It was two by the village clock,  
When he came to the bridge in Concord town.

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.

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 for evermore!