

THE POETIC JUSTICE SERIES
an *auto*SOCRATIC QUICK-START publication

Concord Hymn

Ralph Waldo Emerson



Published by:
*auto*SOCRATIC PRESS
www.rationalsys.com

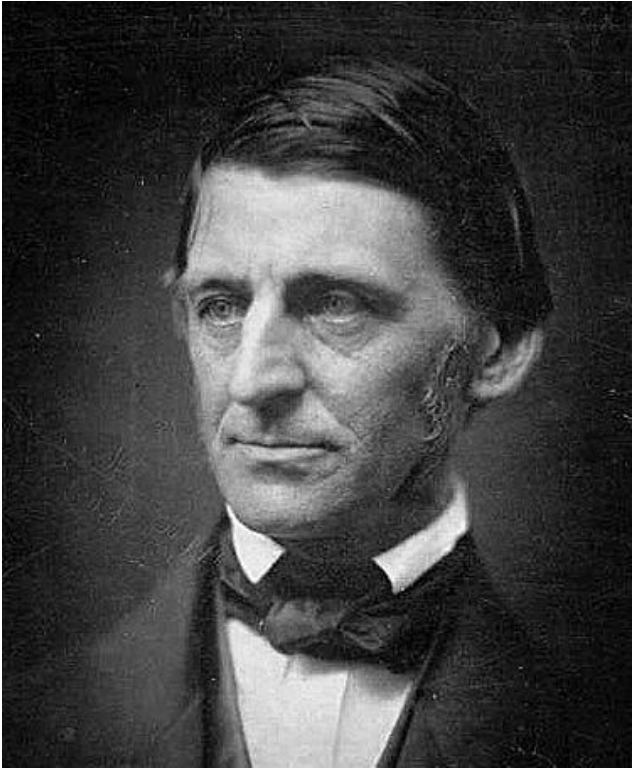
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Center for
auto SOCRATIC EXCELLENCE



A Short Biography
Ralph Waldo Emerson



RALPH WALDO EMERSON

1803-1882

4

LIBERATION

From Harvard to Divinity School to Europe

Emerson's well-traveled life led him to Harvard Divinity School, and eventually becoming a pastor in Boston.

Emerson's wife, sick with tuberculosis, died in 1831.

His wife's death made Emerson question many things about the church, communion, etc.

"...in order to be a good minister, it was necessary to leave the ministry. The profession is antiquated."

Emerson traveled through Europe, meeting philosophers, poets, and great literary figures.

TRANSCENDENTALISM

The Language of Nature

At a botanical garden
In Paris, Emerson
was amazed by the
organization and
classification of
plants.

Emerson contrasted
this experience of
everything being
connected with his
theological
upbringing.

This moment of
"visionary intensity"
led him from
theology towards
science.

Settling in Concord,
MA with his step-
grandfather, and
viewed the budding
Lyceum Movement
of lectures.

Emerson became a
lecturer on nature
and many other
topics.

THE CONCORD HYMN

In Remembrance of Things Past

Emerson married his second wife in 1835, bought a house in Concord, and became a leading citizen of the town.

Concord, MA was founded in 1635, named due to the peaceful acquisition of the land from Native Americans.

Emerson gave a lecture on Concord in 1835 as a celebration of the 200th anniversary of the town.

As the tipping point to the Revolutionary War, a committee asked Emerson to write a hymn.

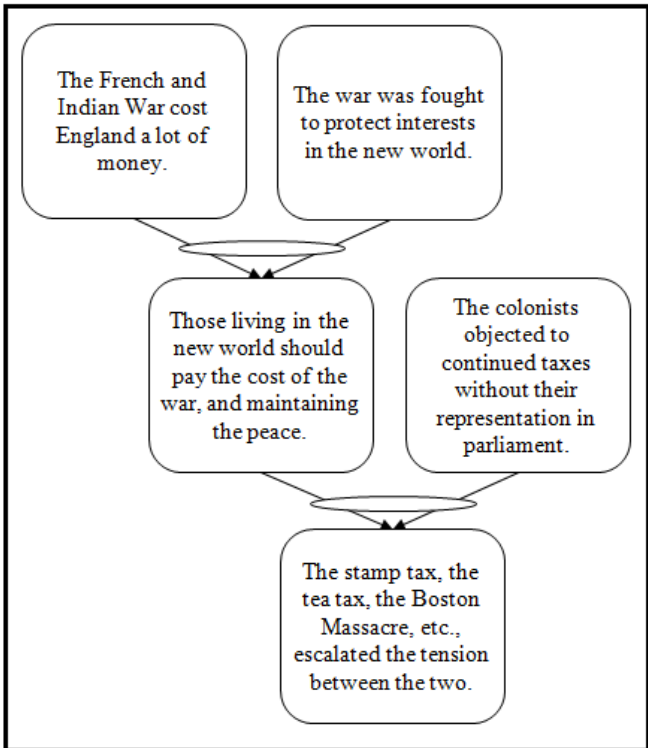
"Concord Hymn" was first read and sung on Independence Day, 1837.

Concord Hymn

The Context

MOUNTING TENSION

The 13 Colonies VERSUS England



FINAL STRAW

The British Tea Party

The treatment of tea, without representation, led to mounting tension in Boston Harbor.

Bringing the issue to a conclusion, Bostonians dressed as Indians dumped the tea into Boston Harbor.

The English, enraged, blockaded the harbor until the lost tea was paid for.

The Colonists had no interest in paying for the lost tea.

A showdown loomed.

ADVERSARIES

It's Best to Disarm Your Opponent Before You Fight Them

The colonial militia had stockpiled munitions in the countryside.

To prevent rebellion, the British needed to secure American firearms.

The British planned on secretly raiding the munition stockpile in Concord, 18 miles west of Boston.

The British could come by two routes - over land, or by sea, across the Charles River.

Lights in the North Church Tower, alerted Paul Revere and others "one if by land, two if by sea".

LEXINGTON

The Shot Heard Round The World

Riders alerted the colonists, who were ready to fight "in a minute".

The British, on their way to Concord, encountered a group of Minutemen in Lexington.

A shot rang out, and many were killed in the skirmish due to "the shot heard round the world".

The British continued on their way to Concord.

The countryside, now alerted, swarmed into Concord.

CONCORD

Escalation was at hand!

Knowing the British were coming, most munitions were already buried.

The armed minutemen left Concord, as their leaders and weapons were secured.

The British, finding nothing, burned gun carriages used for munitions.

The colonists, seeing the smoke, thought the British were burning Concord, and headed back to town.

Escalation was at hand!

THE BRIDGE

The Tipping Point - No Turning Back

Thinking their town ablaze, hundreds of minutemen approached the bridge crossing Concord River.

The English had retreated across the bridge.

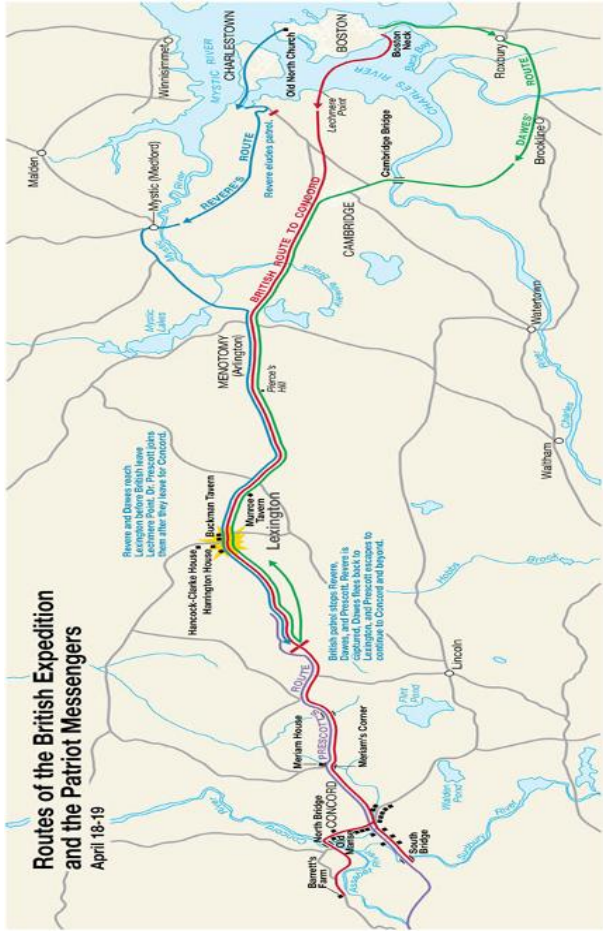
The bridge became a battleground, with the colonists victorious!

Having secured the bridge, the routed English raced to Boston under continual and heavy fire.

There was no turning back: a revolution was at hand!

Routes of the British Expedition and the Patriot Messengers

April 18-19



Concord Hymn
The Poem



Concord Hymn

Ralph Waldo Emerson

By the rude bridge that arched the flood,
Their flag to April's breeze unfurled,
Here once the embattled farmers stood,
And fired the shot heard round the world.

The foe long since in silence slept;
Alike the conqueror silent sleeps;
And Time the ruined bridge has swept
Down the dark stream which seaward creeps.

On this green bank, by this soft stream,
We set to-day a votive stone;
That memory may their deed redeem,
When, like our sires, our sons are gone.

Spirit, that made those heroes dare,
To die, and leave their children free,
Bid Time and Nature gently spare
The shaft we raise to them and thee.

Concord Hymn
Metaphorically

MELANCHOLY

When Something Has Sadly Faded From Memory

In Emerson's "Concord Hymn", he writes a short hymn on the Battle of Concord.

A monument is being dedicated in remembrance of this tipping point of the Revolutionary War.

"Concord Hymn" tells how we not only forget history, but how we can remember it.

There are many times when great things in the present fade from memory.

THE
MELANCHOLY
METAPHOR:
"Concord Hymn",
said with a sense of
sadness.

A VOTIVE MARKER

A Vow - Celebration - Marker for Something Needing Marking

In Emerson's "Concord Hymn", he's written a hymn in remembrance of the historic Battle of Concord.

In conjunction with the hymn, there is an obelisk / statue dedication.

"We set today a votive stone" means "we remember something special with this object".

There are many things worth remembering, and there's many ways of remembering them.

THE VOTIVE MARKER METAPHOR:
"We set today this votive _____."

