

# Pole Capping

April 7, 2018

Sharon McDonald, Town Historian

Listen, my friends and you shall hear  
The story we all have held so dear  
Twas the eighteenth of April in '75  
No woman or man is now alive  
Who was there in that famous yesteryear.

But remember, my friends, all of what came before!  
The Intolerable Acts that true patriots abhor  
You can't tax a people who have not a voice  
You can't rule a people who have not a choice  
And Parliament's actions we couldn't ignore.

We threw all their tea deep down into the drink  
And stood there together while we watched it sink  
Then steeped our own tea made of herbage homegrown  
To see the effect on the man on the throne  
And we cheered when our steadfast reply made him blink.

They closed Boston port so that we could not trade  
Thinking their taxes would finally be paid.  
But when they thought that, then they didn't know us  
We don't stay oppressed without making a fuss  
When American patriots' hearts are betrayed

In meetings by night and in meetings by day  
The Boston-town Liberty's Sons led the way  
Hancock and Adams and Mister Revere  
These were not the only three voices we'd hear  
We colonials all would demand our say.

An emblem to us was the Liberty Tree  
It spoke out to all without secrecy  
And the message it sent to the country was clear  
To all it declared, "We will not live in fear"  
And affirmed to Americans, "We will be free!"

When they cut down the tree; we replaced it right there  
A Liberty Pole towering high in the air  
A natural tree will take eons to grow  
We would not wait for that, wanting all here to know  
Before tree hit the ground, we'd respond to the dare.

E'er the pole was upright, we had gathered below  
And the bravest of us, with an eye on the foe  
Felt for a handhold, and gripped the rope strong.  
And then clambered up it. It did not take long.

At the summit, releasing one hand to their head  
And waving the Liberty cap bright and red  
“We are slave to no person,” shouted out to the throng.

Some to the King and to Britain stayed true  
Others among us had ideas that were new  
Democracy’s time had finally come  
And we proved it with fife and we proved it with drum  
History was written by what we would do.

And so it was on that warm April night  
The fierce British army, in all of their might  
Crossed over the bay with muskets at ready  
Marched through the moonlight with pace so steady  
Prepared if they would to begin the fight.

In Lexington, they were ready, too  
Though ready for what they hardly knew  
Then far up the highway the British appeared  
The Militia stood tall as the Regulars neared  
Held their fire, as they were ordered to do.

“Yet if there’s to be war, then let it begin  
Here in the smoke and the blood and the din.”  
That’s what the Lexington Captain would shout.  
That’s what the clash on the green was about.  
It was years till we knew whether freedom would win.

The British kept marching in step up the road  
They had no idea what their skirmish would bode  
By the time they reached Concord the word was far spread  
“The Regulars are out,” the messengers said.  
Hundreds were responding before the cock crowed.

The stories are many of how it transpired  
How they faced off at the bridge and the first shot was fired  
And one fellow from Bedford recalled for his sons  
“I stood with an old battle-flag ‘gainst the guns”  
Of retelling the history, we never get tired.

It took eight long years to attain victory.  
What we won was priceless: our own liberty.  
Now we gather each April; the flags fly again  
So they won’t be forgotten, these brave minutemen  
And their drums rattling sharply the heartbeat of all  
And their fifes praising mournfully those who did fall  
And the cap of defiance we thrust onto this tree.  
And the cap of defiance we thrust onto this tree.