

Thomas Gage

British Commanding General & Governor of Massachusetts, Orders to Lt. Col. Smith, 10th Regiment of Foot

“ Having received intelligence, that a quantity of ammunition, provision, artillery, tents and small arms, having been collected at Concord, for the avowed purpose of raising and supporting a rebellion against His Majesty; you will march with the Corps of Grenadiers and Light Infantry, put under your command, with the utmost secrecy to Concord, where you will seize and destroy...all military stores whatever. But you will take care that the soldiers do not plunder the inhabitants, or hurt private property.

You have a draught of Concord, on which is marked the houses, barns, etc, which contain the above military stores. You will order a trunion to be knocked off each gun, but if its found impracticable on any, they must be spiked, and the carriages destroyed. The powder and flower must be shook out of the barrels into the river, the tents burnt, pork or beef destroyed in the best way you can devise. And the men may put balls of lead in their pockets, throwing them by degrees into ponds, ditches etc, but no quantity together, so that they may be recovered afterwards.

If you meet any brass artillery, you will order their muzzles to be beat in so as to render them useless.

You will observe by the draught that it will be necessary to secure the two bridges as soon as possible, you will therefore order out a party of the best marchers, to go on with expedition for the purpose.

A small party on horseback is ordered out to stop all advice of your march getting to Concord before you, and a small number of Artillery go out in chaises to wait for you on the road, with sledge hammers, pikes, etc.

You will open your business and return with the Troops, as soon as possible, which I must leave to your own Judgment and Discretion.”