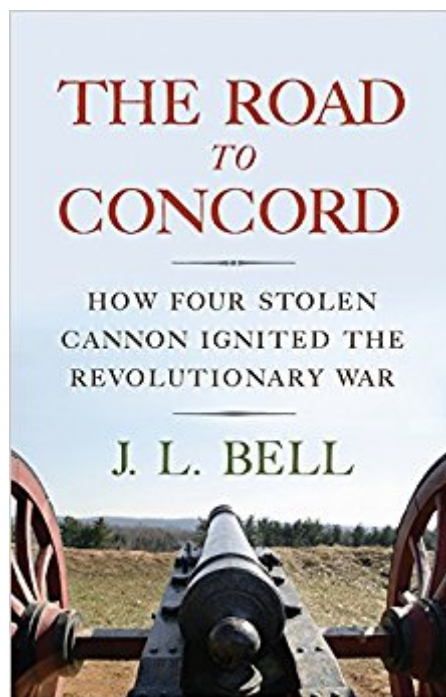




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# **The Road To Concord: How Four Stolen Cannon Ignited The Revolutionary War (Journal Of The American Revolution Books)**



## Synopsis

In the early spring of 1775, on a farm in Concord, Massachusetts, British army spies located four brass cannon belonging to Boston's colonial militia that had gone missing months before. British general Thomas Gage had been searching for them, both to stymie New England's growing rebellion and to erase the embarrassment of having let cannon disappear from armories under redcoat guard. Anxious to regain those weapons, he drew up plans for his troops to march nineteen miles into unfriendly territory. The Massachusetts Patriots, meanwhile, prepared to thwart the general's mission. There was one goal Gage and his enemies shared: for different reasons, they all wanted to keep the stolen cannon as secret as possible. Both sides succeeded well enough that the full story has never appeared until now. *The Road to Concord: How Four Stolen Cannon Ignited the Revolutionary War* by historian J. L. Bell reveals a new dimension to the start of America's War for Independence by tracing the spark of its first battle back to little-known events beginning in September 1774. The author relates how radical Patriots secured those four cannon and smuggled them out of Boston, and how Gage sent out spies and search parties to track them down. Drawing on archives in the United States, United Kingdom, and Canada, the book creates a lively, original, and deeply documented picture of a society perched on the brink of war.

## Book Information

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## Customer Reviews

I thought I knew the story of the build-up to Lexington/Concord pretty well. However, J.L. Bell has

demonstrated in this outstanding book that I still had a lot to learn. I had never considered the vast quantity of artillery of all sizes, conditions and ages that were in the hands of the British, the various militia organizations and privately owned. The quest for cannon by both sides and the intrigues, spying, stealing and hiding the cannon is fascinating. In particular there are four brass cannon that Gates was determined to regain. This book is beautifully written, thoroughly documented and is must reading for anyone interested in the beginning of the American Revolution. The text is augmented with excellent, easy-to-follow maps. The research involved is staggering. The result is an exceptional book that deserves to be read. I could not have hoped for more.

An interesting account of what triggered the start of the American Revolution. Extremely informative and thoroughly researched, this book documents how four missing brass cannon created a significant concern among Gen. Gage and the British occupiers of Boston in late 1774 and early 1775. Using new research and actual detail from Gage's own records, J.L. Bell tells an important story about how the wheels were set in motion for the "shot heard 'round the world" in Lexington and subsequent skirmish in Concord, Mass., that kicked off the American Revolution. Full of detail and interesting information about key players from that seminal moment, "The Road to Concord" is both revealing and intriguing in the idea of how strong the fervor for "civil war" was on both sides of the Atlantic. Certainly this was just the trigger point of a highly explosive situation but it underscores how misinformation and supposition can flame passions and excite political opponents. The book is a little slow in places but more than makes up for it with its attention to detail and the author's dedication to getting it right. Personally, I would have preferred more description on the events at Lexington and Concord, but that was not the intent of the book, which was written to document the role of four missing brass cannon and the determination by the British army to get them back before hostilities began. Very enjoyable and informative!

As the editor of Journal of the American Revolution, I want to welcome readers to the inaugural volumes of our book series. In addition to our online magazine and annual volumes, Journal of the American Revolution ([allthingsliberty.com](http://allthingsliberty.com)) also oversees this series of microhistories. Our mission is to feature meticulous, ideally groundbreaking research and well-written narratives about unknown or lesser-known topics. And J. L. Bell delivers on that promise with his outstanding *The Road to Concord*. Look for more great titles in the Journal of the American Revolution book series, including Todd Braisted's *Grand Forage 1778* (May 2016) and Steven Park's *The Burning of His Majesty's Schooner Gaspee* (November 2016). Thank you and enjoy!

I loved this book . It gave me a sense of how the original Colonists went about their daily lives, stage a revolt and managed to defeat the most powerful Army and Navy in the world. All the Colonists wanted was to be treated as equals to their British homeland citizens. I was amazed at how organized the mostly self-governing patriots were especially in their local councils and Colonial legislatures; J.L. Bell has captured the spirit of those times and kept me on edge as the story of the start of the Revolution evolves. Mr. Bell has a wonderful blog: [boston1775.blogspot.com/](http://boston1775.blogspot.com/). As a genealogist and a person interested in history, I have discovered so much by visiting this site. You won't be disappointed in this book and you can read it in a few days.

Being familiar with J.L. Bell and his admirable knowledge of the American Revolutionary, I expected this book to be among the best books I've read on the American Revolution. In the end, *The Road to Concord* managed to exceed my expectations. The book is incredibly well written and thoroughly researched, and J.L.'s storytelling makes for an easy read. Mr. Bell is one of the few historians whose excitement and interest in the topic shines through on the page, as he helps you to paint clear and vivid mental imagery. He even manages to work in perfectly timed pops of humor throughout the book. *The Road to Concord* is an incredibly intriguing story and overflowing with little known facts. From prologue to epilogue, it's a delightful read that anyone interested in the American Revolution is sure to enjoy immensely. I always feel much more informed after reading something J.L. has written!

Good book, with lots of research. About my only complaint was the insistence throughout that the "4 cannon" were so instrumental in the war breaking out/ I guess it was his subtitle so he pushed it.

This small book is full of new information regarding the lead-up to Lexington and Concord. As a youngster growing up just outside of Boston, I read all I could about the start of the Revolutionary War but the accepted explanations of the expedition to Concord left me unconvinced that that was all there was to it. Now we know better. Also, the war preparations going on all over New England in the years prior to 1775 make it clear that war was inevitable and that being a Tory was dangerous to your health. A must read.

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