

Sybil Ludington's Ride

Everyone knows about Paul Revere and his ride, but fewer people know about a female Paul Revere. The "female Paul Revere" was Sybil Ludington. Her trip was twice as long!

Sybil was born in Paterson, New York in 1761. Her father was a colonel in the local militia. Sybil helped at home by spinning, knitting, weaving, and sewing. She also made butter, soap, candles baking bread, mending clothes, and washing dishes. Sybil assisted her mother in gardening. She had twelve brothers and sisters. The female heroine also had a horse named Star. Star also helped Sybil ride the night ride.

When she was 16, her mother expected her to be responsible and to act lady-like. She wanted to be in the militia because she was tired of being ruled by Great Britain. Just like everyone else, she wanted to be free and independent.

She was just tucking in her brothers and sisters when an exhausted messenger came to her house to warn her family about something. The messenger said that British soldiers were burning down the town of Danbury, Connecticut. Danbury was the supply center for the militia. Only 150 militia men were there to protect the town. Someone had to warn the farmers about the attack. The messenger was too tired to go any further. Sybil's father was in charge of the militia so he could not leave. Sybil wanted to take the job and her father agreed to let her go. So, she got ready for the 40-mile trip that awaited her.

She started off at her house. Then she and her horse Star rode to the first farmhouse. She just knocked their door and shouted the message. Then she hurried off to the farmhouses along Horse Pound Road. When she reached the farmhouses there, she did what she did before- knock on the door, and shout out her message. It was about ten o' clock when Sybil reached Shaw's Pond. Then she remembered that so many people were sleeping. So she did not beat on every door or shout at every house. Instead neighbors called to each other and the first ones awake would rush to ring the town bell. Still her job was not finished. She still had to warn the men in the regiment. As she rode in the darkness, British soldiers were going the other way. So she and her horse Star hid behind a tree.

When she reached the next town, Stormville the alarm already had begun to sound. Someone from another town had already come with the news. Sybil was glad and she and Star headed home. When she got home, more than 400 men were ready to march. The eastern sky was red, Sybil realized that she had ridden all night. Her family was really proud of her, but she did not feel like a real soldier. All she wanted to do was to sleep.

People spread the word about Sybil. Soon General Washington went to her house to thank her for her courage. Even Statesman Alexander Hamilton wrote to her, praising her deed. Even though she didn't get to Stormville in time, she was still brave enough to ride for independence.

At the age of twenty-three, Sybil was married to Edmond Ogden. She had six children and she took well care of her family. Sometimes she would stop and think back to the wet and cold night in the year of 1777.

Sybil Ludington lived to be seventy-eight years old. Her children and their children's children loved to hear the story of a young girl and her ride for independence.

We will never forget Sybil Ludington.

Children's Encyclopedia of Women

This encyclopedia was begun in March 1998 by third and fourth grade students at Pocantico Hills School in Sleepy Hollow, NY. We have added to it during March and April of each year since then. We are currently in the process of adding to the collection with this student work. The children choose a woman based on a topic they are interested in. This is by no means a complete collection. We hope you enjoy your visit and come back soon to see our new addition!

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