

Chapter 1: Chapter by Chapter Summary & Analysis of *my brother Sam is dead*

Chapter I: Summary and Analysis

The story begins in April of 1775. Sam Meeker returns home from college in uniform and full of excitement. "We've beaten the British in Massachusetts" are the first words out of his mouth. This comes as a surprise to his father, mother, brother, minister and other locals in the taproom of the Meeker's tavern; they are unaware of the rebellion brewing in Boston.

Timeline of what Sam is so excited about:

- February 1, 1775: a provincial congress was held in Cambridge, Massachusetts during which John Hancock and Joseph Warren begin defensive preparations for a state of war.
- February 9, 1775: the English Parliament declares Massachusetts to be in a state of rebellion.
- March 23, 1775: Patrick Henry delivers a speech in Virginia against British rule, stating, "Give me liberty or give me death!"
- March 30, 1775: the New England Restraining Act is endorsed by King George the Third, requiring New England Colonies to trade exclusively with England and bans fishing in the North Atlantic.
- April 14, 1775: Massachusetts Governor Thomas Gage is ordered to enforce the Coercive Acts and suppress "open rebellion" among the colonists by all necessary force.
- April 18, 1775: Governor Gage orders 700 British soldiers to Concord to destroy the colonists' weapons depot. That night Paul Revere makes his famous ride reaching Lexington around midnight to warn Sam Adams and John Hancock of the British plan.
- April 19, 1775: 70 rebels face off against the British on Lexington Green. An unordered shot is fired and results in musket volleys and a bayonet charge which leaves 8 Americans dead and 10 injured. The British proceed to Concord, destroy the colonists' weapon depot, yet are surprised by the rebels on a bridge in Concord and suffer 14 casualties. They are continually attacked by the rebels on their retreat back to Boston and lose over 250 men.
- News of these events spread like wildfire through the Colonies. Sam Meeker portrays one example of how this news was delivered and received.

After the initial shock of Sam's report, his father questions him about the specifics of the events in Boston.

Sam: "Well, the beginning was when the Lobsterbacks-"

Life: "By that I suppose you mean the soldiers of your King,"

Life's displeasure with Sam's use of Lobsterbacks to describe the British is our first indication of the Meeker family's allegiance to the King of England: they are Anglican Church members who regularly pray for the health of the King and Parliament.

What's comical and ironic about Sam's commentary is his use of the word "Lobsterbacks" over and over again; Sam is wearing a scarlet red coat himself. One would expect an American soldier to be dressed in Blue or tan, but many colors (green, brown, blue, purple, tan, black & white) were used by different companies of soldiers in that period. The different colors distinguished the regiments from one another.

After Sam recounts what he knows about Lexington and Concord the room is filled with emotion & concern:

Farmer: "...that's Rebellion, they'll have us in war yet."

Mr. Beach: "I think men of common sense will prevail. Nobody wants rebellion except fools and hotheads."

Sam: "That's not what they say in New Haven, sir, they say that the whole colony of Massachusetts is ready to fight and if Massachusetts fights, Connecticut will fight too."

Life: "I WILL NOT HAVE TREASON SPOKEN IN MY HOUSE, SAM!"

[Treason- noun: Violation of allegiance toward one's country or sovereign, especially betrayal of one's country by waging war against it or by consciously and purposely acting to aid its enemies.]

The reaction of those present mimics the reaction of men, women and children throughout the colonies in 1775. War with England was a frightful thought, below are some examples why:

- The British Army was powerful and experienced. Many men, 40 years of age or older, had fought along side the British soldiers in the French and Indian War. They had experienced, first-hand, the skill and tenacity of the enemy.
- Land to the West of the Appalachian Mountains was occupied by Indians, the Spanish and the French, not Americans. Would the colonists be able to defend themselves from attacks from any one of them without the assistance of the British Army?
- Successful businesses and merchants worried that if America split from England they would be at risk of losing their prosperity.
- Without a plan for self-government in place how would the colonies function politically?
- For families that attended Anglican Churches their religion was directly tied to England and a split from England would surely threaten their future.

As the main characters debate the issues, we receive the opinions of the Rebels from Sam and the opinions of the Loyalists from his father and Mr. Beach.

Mr. Beach: "I don't think the people of Redding are anxious to fight, Sam."

Sam: "You get the wrong idea from Redding, sir. There's a lot more Tories in this part of Connecticut than in the rest of the colonies."

Mr. Beach: "...These agitators can always manage to stir up the passions of the people for a week or so, but it never lasts. A month later everybody's forgotten it- except the wives and children of the men who've managed to get themselves killed." *Foreshadows the fate of both Life and Sam.

Sam: "Sir, it's worth dying to be free." *Foreshadows Sam's death.

Life: "Free? Free to do what, Sam? Free to mock your King? To shoot your neighbor? To make a mess of a thousand lives?..."

Sam: "Why should they get rich off our taxes back in England? They're 3,000 miles away, how can they make laws for us?"

When Sam's comments to Mr. Beach become disrespectful, Life loses his temper and the discussion ends. Mr. Beach heads off to the church, and Tim explains the relationships within his family and his feelings about them. He also describes the tavern/store his family operates on Redding Ridge, and the tasks a boy like himself was responsible for in that time period. We learn of the role and importance of religion in the life of the Meeker family too, it is clear Tim and Sam have been raised on the ideals of the Church of England:

Tim: "Mother said that idle hands make the Devil's Work."

Tim: "Sam couldn't boast about his triumphs to Father or Mother or Mr. Beach or anybody like that, because boasting was pride and pride was a sin..."

Tim: "Don't curse," I said. "It's a sin."

Talk of war returns towards the end of the chapter, first when Sam discloses to Tim that he came back to Redding for his father's gun and second when Sam and Life argue over Sam taking the gun and going to Massachusetts. Foreshadowing of what will happen later in the novel occurs in both these conversations:

Tim states that: "he (Life) took it (the gun) with him every fall when he went over to Verplancks Point to sell cattle and buy supplies for the store. He'd never met up with any trouble...but people he knew had been held up and robbed." Tim obviously knows the importance of the gun and the purpose it serves his father on cattle runs.

Life knowing the horrors of war, (having fought in the Siege of Louisbourg during the French and Indian War) attempts to reason with Sam using examples of the atrocities he experienced personally when Sam exclaims that he is "...going to fight to keep my country free." Sam refuses to be reasoned with and finally Life orders him to leave:

Life: "Go, Sam. Go. Get out of my sight. I can't bear to look at you anymore in that vile costume. Get out..."

After the door slams shut Tim hears something he has never heard before...his father crying.

Tim: "Father had his head down on the table, and he was crying. I'd never seen him cry before in my whole life; and I knew there were bad times ahead."

There were certainly bad times ahead, the hardships of war were marching towards them. Men like Life would soon be called traders, loyalists and tories because they did not support the rebellion. Some would stay and remain silent, others would leave and join the British forces, in either case they would suffer.

What do we learn about the characters in Chapter I?

1. Sam Meeker:

- Is for the rebellion
- Is returning from college in New Haven (Yale)
- Likes being the center of attention
- Is in the Governor's Second Foot Guard under Captain Benedict Arnold
- Has a bad temper
- Often speaks before thinking about what he's saying
- Is sixteen years of age and has been in college for less than a year
- Was a triumphant sort of person
- Has runaway a few times after arguing with his father

- Plans on taking his father's gun (Brown Bess) so he can go with his company to Massachusetts and fight the Lobsterbacks.

2. Eliphalet (Life) Meeker:

- Is against the rebellion
- Is practical and to-the-point
- Has a bad temper
- Believes children ought to keep a civil tongue in their heads and respect their elders
- Has hit Sam before, mostly for arguing
- Owns a store/tavern on Redding Ridge
- Is a veteran of the French and Indian War where he saw several friends die.
- Is an Anglican church member
- Sees himself as an Englishman and subject of the King.

3. Tim Meeker:

- Looks up to his brother Sam, "Oh, I envied him"
- Finds it funny that Sam keeps saying "Lobsterback" when he was dressed in red, too.
- Doesn't like to see his father and Sam fight
- Is confused by the topic of rebellion, thinks Sam makes some good points but figures there is more to it than Sam knew about
- Respects his father's practical knowledge
- Wants the debating/fighting to end and for things to be like they used to be
- Knows that Sam might run away to Warrups' hut if the fighting gets bad enough
- Is aware of right and wrong, what you should and shouldn't do

4. Susannah Meeker:

- Had not seen Sam since Christmas
- Does not like it when Life hits Sam for speaking out but believes Life is right that children ought to keep a civil tongue in their head and respect their elders

5. Mr. Beach:

- Is the minister at the Anglican Church on Redding Ridge
- Is against the rebellion
- Feels loyalty to England is virtue everywhere in America
- Warns Sam that "God meant man to obey." As he sees it, King George the Third is the head of the Anglican Church and thus his subjects should obey him and should not question his ways.

Chapter II: Summary and Analysis

Tim provides background information about his mother, father, town, neighborhood and religion at the onset of chapter two. His comments here are very important to the story as they show us that the war caused division not only between England and America but also between families, neighbors, and countrymen. In chapter one we learned that Tim's family is divided over the rebellion, and in chapter two we learn some underlying factors that will play a part in why his neighborhood, town and ultimately the American Colonies will be divided over "...whether we ought to obey His Majesty's government or whether we should rebel."

The most important comment Tim makes in chapter two is "What kept confusing me about it was that the argument didn't have two sides the way an argument should, but about six sides." Tim is speaking of "opinions" people had of the British government's policies following the French and Indian War. These new policies hampered America's economic and geographical growth via:

- Taxes
- Trade restrictions
- The Presence of British troops in America (and cost of having them here)

- British efforts to prevent westward expansion of the colonies
- The Political corruption of Royal Governors

The anger over these policies had reached a boiling point and as Tim states: "...it wasn't going to be just arguments anymore." The reason Tim's comment is so important is that the debate over rebellion was a complex topic with many sides that needed to be examined and decided on by the American colonists prior to a rebellion. Issues like: economics, government, religion, and safety in the American Colonies should they gain Independence from Great Britain were very important questions that really did not have answers before the events at Lexington and Concord thrust the American citizens into war with the British.

To know people in your country (including your own son) planned on engaging in military skirmishes with the intention of gaining Independence from imperial rule without a strategic plan of action nor a solid political agenda was quite alarming. Life Meeker's thoughts echoed many in the American Colonies at the outbreak of the war:

Life: "...The whole argument is over a few taxes that hardly amount to anything for most people. What's the use of principles if you have to be dead to keep them? We're Englishmen, Timmy. Of course there are injustices; there are always injustices, that's the way of God's world. But you never get rid of injustices by fighting. Look at Europe, they've had one war after another for hundreds of years, and show me where anything ever got any better for them..."

He was absolutely right, one war after another had plunged England into such a financial deficit that it had to turn to its colonies to help pay for war debts. The reaction to these taxes and trade restrictions paved the way to the Revolution, so England didn't have anything better because of war and it was about to get worse.

But the debating was over now, the war had begun and from this point forward all anyone wanted to know was "what side are you on?" As Anglican Church members it was tough to be on the side of the Patriots (rebels) when your minister, Mr. Beach, made loyalty to the King the subject of his Sunday sermon.

Tim: "He said that our first duty was to God but that our Lord Jesus Christ had said, "Render therefore unto Caesar the things which are Caesar's" and that meant we were supposed to be loyal Englishmen. He said that hot-tempered young men who listened not to the voices of their elders would bring a wrathful God down on their own heads. He said that the Bible commanded youth to honor their fathers, which made me pretty nervous for Sam, because it was a sin to shout at your father the way he had done, and maybe God would punish him...between being worried about that (God getting Sam) and being confused over which side was right I couldn't concentrate on church much. I just wanted to get out of there. But Mr. Beach always preached at least an hour and being fired up about the Lexington battle he went on longer."

Tim's commentary in chapter two distinguishes him as a metaphoric symbol of one third of the American population during the war. He portrays the American that is uncertain which side is right and does not wish to choose a side until forced to, sometimes referred to as "fence-sitters". Sam and Life are examples of the other two thirds: the rebel/patriot and the tory/loyalist. While there were obviously more than three positions regarding the war it is easiest to group them in this fashion.

Betsy Read: "Timmy are you on your father's side or Sam's?"

Tim: "I wished she hadn't asked me that question. I didn't want to answer it ; in fact, I didn't know how to answer it. 'I don't understand what it's all about,' I said."

Sam: "It's simple, either we're going to be free or we're not."

Betsy: "It isn't that simple, Sam. There's more to it."

The ensuing conversation between Sam, Betsy and Tim at Tom Warrups' hut contains a foreshadowing comment by Sam:

Sam: "Nobody wants to get killed, but you should be willing to die for your principles."

And a foreshadowing comment by Tim:

Tim: "Sam, you can't take it (the gun), we need it at home. Father needs it."

Sam being a triumphant sort of person is still speaking without thinking about what he is saying. His bravado and zest for action have taken over and he's ready to go to war at all costs. He's even willing to take away the only defense his family has at home and his father has on his cattle runs to live up to his principles and teach the King a lesson.

Themes that develop in Chapter II

1. News of the Rebellion has Tim's family, his neighborhood and his town divided over which side they are on. Most Congregationalist Church members are siding with the Patriots/Rebels. The majority of Anglican Church members are siding with England. There are also those who are undecided or simply do not wish to pick a side.
2. Sam is willing to risk his life and his family's safety in the name of freedom.

Chapter III: Summary and Analysis

Chapter 3 does not offer much information; Tim explains what life in Redding is like in the summer of 1775. He misses Sam and is still confused about which side he is on.

Tim: "I still hadn't made up my mind which side I was on in the war, and I didn't care whether Sam was a Patriot or a Tory or what. All I could think about was snuggling up to him and listening to him talk about scoring telling points."

The war was underway but the "...battles all seemed far away- they were just things we read about in the Connecticut Journal and other newspapers." As far as Tim is concerned "it wasn't any different from usual, it was just normal."

What was abnormal were the topics being discussed in the tavern, and Betsy Read does her best to linger around and listen to what is being said. Betsy is looking out for Sam and his company. She stated in chapter 2 that: "I'd fight if I could." She cannot and so her contribution to the rebellion is information.

Chapter IV: Summary and Analysis

Sam has returned to Redding but Tim's excitement quickly turns to fear when rebel soldiers* arrive at the tavern to disarm his father. When his father explains that his son, Sam, has taken his gun and run off to join the Patriot army, the soldiers aren't buying it and start to rough him up. If the Brown Bess cannot be found Tim fears they will kill his father.

[*Committees of Safety did disarm known Loyalists in the early stages of the American Revolution. In this case, Tim's father is considered to be a Loyalist because he is an Anglican Church member. The soldiers do not believe Life's story about Sam taking the gun because of the Meeker families affiliation with the Anglican Church, also known as the Church of England...why would an Anglican want to fight *with* the Rebels?]

Tim: "I knew the Rebels weren't just playing; they'd kill Father if they wanted to."

His daydreams of heading up to Tom Warrups' hut to visit Sam have been replaced with nightmarish visions:

Tim: "All I could see in front of me was that Rebel officer pushing a sword through Father's stomach."

In a panic he races frantically to Lonetown and is able to get the gun away from Sam, who is asleep, but cannot out run his brother once Sam discovers what has happened. The brothers face-off in a confrontation that ultimately defines Tim's position on the war and alters his view of Sam.

Tim: "I leveled the Brown Bess at his stomach and I said, don't come any closer, Sam, or I'll shoot you."

Sam: "It isn't loaded Tim."

Tim: "You're a liar."

Sam: "Timmy, don't be crazy. It isn't loaded. Now give it to me before it gets damaged."

Tim: "Jesus, Sam, Jesus, they're down there and they're going to kill Father if he doesn't give them the Brown Bess."

Sam: "Who? Who's down there?"

Tim: "Some Continentals, with some others from Fairfield."

Tim, narrating: "Then he lunged. I never knew whether I would have pulled the trigger because the next thing I was lying on the ground with Sam on top of me, and he'd got the gun."

Sam: "You would have shot me, you little pig, wouldn't you?" then he got up. "Are you all right?"

Tim: "I wouldn't tell you if I wasn't, you son of a -----. By this time they've probably killed Father."

Sam: "Timmy, I can't go down there...I'm not supposed to be here"

Tim: "All right then, let me take the gun home and give it to them."

Sam: "I can't do that, Tim. If I go back to camp without my weapon, they'll surely hang me."

Tim: "Oh God, Sam, what did you have to fight for? Why didn't you stay in college?"

Sam: "I couldn't, Tim. How could I not go when all of my friends were going?"

Tim: "Your family ought to be more important than your friends...I think you're a coward."

Sam: "No, I'm not"

Tim: "All right, Sam, if you're not a coward, come home with me and see if everything is alright."

Sam agrees to follow Tim as far as the barn, but once the house is in sight realizes his place and crosses the barnyard with Tim to the kitchen. In the kitchen, Life, with a line of dried blood across his face, stands within five feet of Sam who stares back at his father, then turns and runs away from him for the last time.

The war has forced Tim to mature and take on responsibilities that he normally would not have. The events of Chapter Four call for quick and decisive thinking on his part and Tim has chosen the side of his father. The glorified view he once had of the Rebel Troops fighting against the British Lobsterbacks in some far away place, has been replaced with threatening soldiers in his own home.

Tim: "The war had finally come to Redding, and it was terrible."

Tim has not completely lost respect and admiration for Sam but it is clear that Tim has chosen to defend his family not "principles".

Chapter V: Summary and Analysis

Chapter Five is a narrative chapter. Tim paints us a picture of the dilemma's Redding is facing at this point in the war:

- Loyalists have lost their guns to the Committee's of Safety, as a result they no longer have any protection and can no longer hunt for food
- Food was getting short
- Cows, Cattle and other livestock were being stolen
- Soldiers from Redding were coming home injured; Some local soldiers had been killed

But for Tim, the worst part is Sam is not at home. Despite the drama between Tim and Sam in Chapter Four, time has healed all wounds and Tim worries that Sam will be "shot or get sick and die or something else." He even admits that he envies him several times:

Tim: "It seemed to me that it must feel wonderful to be able to load up a gun in the casual way he did...He (Sam) seemed so brave and grown-up, and I wished that I could be brave an grown-up like him, too...Being a soldier probably didn't have much glory to it...But still, I envied Sam, and I wished I were old enough to do something glorious, too."

Tim's envy stops at Sam, he is still not sure which side is right: the British have the best uniforms though the gritty, underdog position of the Patriots is attractive to him, too.

His neighbor, the mysterious William Heron, offers Tim a sound opportunity to gain some glory of his own...

Tim narrating: "Mr. Heron had wanted me to carry some sort of war message or spy reports or something, and that night as I lay in bed in the loft, I thought about it. Oh, it would scare me all right, walking down to Fairfield with spy messages, but I wanted to do it, because it would give me something to boast about to Sam. He'd been having all the adventures, he was going to come home with terrific stories about being in the army and fighting and all that, and I wanted to have something to tell, too. Why should he have all the glory? Why shouldn't I have some, too? I wanted him to respect me and be proud of me and not think of me as just his little brother anymore."

His father does not want Tim to carry messages for Mr. Heron, he knows it is too risky. As he had done with Sam, Life tries to provide Tim with a sensible explanation of why he does not want him to carry messages for Mr. Heron.

Life: Tim, please, it's dangerous. You think that because you're a child they won't hurt you, but they will. They've been killing children in this war. They don't care. They'll throw you in a prison ship and let you rot. You know what happens to people on those prison ships? They don't last very long. Cholera get them or consumption or something else, and they die. Tim, it isn't worth it."

Life's warnings foreshadow his own fate, and are very true, many died on prison ships during the American Revolution and children were amongst them. Tim's reaction is much different than Sam's but rebellious non-the-less.

Tim: "I knew he was right, that it wasn't worth taking the chance. I wanted to do it anyway. But there wasn't any use in arguing about it with father...Two weeks later I figured out how to do it."

The irony is how Tim figures out how to do it: the idea comes from his friend, Jerry, who dies on a prison ship later in the story.

Chapter VI: Summary and Analysis

Tim has a solid alibi, now he just needs an opportunity to speak to Mr. Heron without his father seeing him. The chance comes two days later when Heron comes into the tavern to buy a keg of rum.

Susannah: "Tim will bring it (keg of rum) right over, Mr. Heron."

Mr. Heron wisely questions Tim when he asks to be a messenger.

Mr. Heron: "Aha, your father changed his mind, did he?"

Tim: "Yes, sir, he said it would be all right so long as he didn't know anything about it."

Mr. Heron: "That's a lie isn't it Tim?"

Tim: "Yes, sir, I'd like to go, though. Aren't we supposed to be loyal to the King?"

Mr. Heron: "You've got you brother's spirit, haven't you?"

Tim is thrilled to be compared with Sam, "I'm as brave as he is" is his response. The thrill and excitement of contributing to the war has overtaken him and though he is cognizant that he is being dishonorable to his father, a shot at "glory" is more important to him.

We see the similarities between Tim and Sam in this chapter:

- Rebelliousness
- Thirst for Glory
- Ignorance of Danger

Tim whistles the patriotic "Yankee Doodle" on his way to Mr. Heron's, which is comical because in order to get the job he did his best to convince Mr. Heron that he's a strong Loyalist. Very similar to Sam wearing red and calling the British "Lobsterbacks".

As he starts on his way to Fairfield, Tim meets up with Betsy. Betsy is traveling too, she has just received news that Sam is in Greenwich (then called Horseneck).

Tim: "Sam? Is he in Horseneck?"

Betsy: "I shouldn't tell you that. You're a Tory."

Tim: "How do you know Sam's there?"

Betsy: "Mr. Heron told me."

Tim: "Mr. Heron? How does he know, he's a Tory?"

Betsy: "Well I know that, but he said that Sam was there with a commissary officer, scouting for beef."

Tim: "Betsy, how come Mr. Heron didn't tell me about Sam this morning?"

Betsy: "What were you seeing Mr. Heron about this morning?"

Tim: "Oh I just happened to go by his house this morning and he was there...standing in the yard."

Betsy: "He wouldn't have been standing...the letter. Tim, you're lying. The letter. He gave you the letter to carry....where are you going with the letter?"

Tim: "I have to go, Betsy."

Betsy: No, Tim, you know what's in that letter? A spy report on Sam."

Tim: "It can't be. Why would Mr. Heron make a spy report on Sam?"

Betsy: "It not just on Sam. Can't you see? He found out about Sam and the commissary officer buying beef, and now he's sending news to the Lobsterbacks so they'll know where to find them and kill them and steal the cows. Give me that letter."

Tim narrating: She snatched at my shirt, but I ducked back. "Don't, Betsy. It's Mr. Heron's."

Betsy: "Tim, it's your brother they are going to kill. Just throw the letter away and say you lost it."

Tim narrating: "I didn't know what to do. I felt awful- sick and scared. I didn't say anything."

A struggle between Betsy and Tim ensues and Tim loses. Betsy takes the letter, reads it and then throws it aside. Tim picks it up to find it reads: "If this message is received, we will know that the messenger is reliable." Tim has failed at his chance for glory.

As embarrassing and disappointing the day has been, Tim is fortunate to have run into Betsy. Had he succeeded in delivering the message for Mr. Heron he would have increasingly been placing himself in dangerous situations in the name of glory, which is precisely what Sam is doing.

Chapter VII: Summary and Analysis

The summer of 1776 has ended and Tim's family begins preparing for the winter months in Chapter Seven. The war is still distant and though no one is really desperate, provisions, like cloth and leather, are running short locally because the soldiers need them for clothing and shoes. Sam has sent two letters and Susannah plans on sending one back to him. Life disapproves but to Tim's delight is overruled and turns his attention to planning his annual cattle run to the Hudson River.

The cattle run to Verplancks is essential to Tim's family, as he explains:

Tim: "The idea of our trip was to drive cattle to Verplancks Point where we could sell them, and then use the money to buy supplies we needed at the tavern and store."

Yet, a cattle run across Westchester County was dangerous and Life, knew it:

Life: "The woods are full of those cow-boys over there. They claim they're patriots gathering beef for the troops, but really they're nothing more than thieves. And we don't have our gun anymore."

Despite the danger, Life doesn't have much of a choice but to take Tim with him, as he states: "There's nobody else to do it."

Tim is thrilled, "there would be a lot of exciting things on the trip-" perhaps something would happen that he could boast to Sam about. As they make their way out of Redding, the trip is every bit as good as he imagined:

Tim: "It seemed pretty exciting when we passed a house, especially if there were some people there. A couple times there were children staring out the windows as we went by. It made me feel proud of myself for being a man while they were still children, and I shouted at the oxen and smacked them on their rumps with my stick, just to show off how casual and easy I was with the oxen and how used I was to managing them."

Tim is mimicking Sam when he shows off "how casual and easy" he is with the oxen. He may not know how to load a musket but he certainly knows livestock. Like Sam, his focus is more on the glory than the danger of the trip, but that changes abruptly once they near the New York line.

Tim narrating: "There were six of them, and they were carrying weapons- mostly muskets, but one or two of them had swords and pistols. They were dressed in ordinary clothing- brown shirts and trousers and muddy boots...They charged up to us, surrounded us, and stopped."

Tim continually calls these men Cow-boys but Cow-boys were loyal to the British and these men are definitely not fond of the British.; They are Skinners. Skinners, like the Cow-boys were "land-going" raiders preying on enemy civilian supplies. Though "Skinners" sympathized with the Patriots, they were comprised largely of tramps and bandits, serving their own interests more often than those of any cause.

The group of men that come to Tim and Life's rescue are Loyalists. This is evident in their conversation with Life:

Life: "Who were those people? Cow-boys?"

Man: Cattle thieves is a better name. We had reports that they were riding this morning, and we've been looking for them all day. You're a Loyalist, I take it?"

Life: "I'm interested in making a living, not fighting a war, my boy and I are just trying to get this beef to Verplancks Point the way I do every year."

Man: "Verplancks Point? It'll go to New York, then. We'll see that it gets there. There are still a lot of people loyal to His Majesty in these parts."

The men escort them to the New York line and summon another group to take them to North Salem. To Tim's disappointment New York State doesn't look or feel any different than Connecticut, it was just like being home. The reality was that it was not "just like being home" as Tim states, he is no longer isolated from war-time activities, he is in the thick of them.

This chapter begins the symbolic journey of Tim's maturation and position on the war. Simultaneously, it lays the groundwork for Life's tragic end. When Life states: "I'm interested in making a living, not fighting a war." He is exposing a theme in the novel, which is the unfairness of war. Life is simply a man that wants to live his life as he always has and that position has placed him and his son in great danger.

Chapter VIII: Summary and Analysis

Life and Tim arrive at the Platt homestead just after dark. Tim's first observation is how lucky he is to have not been raised on a farm when he sees how crowded and uncomfortable the sleeping arrangements are.

Life has not visited in a year and Tim has never met his cousins before, still the topics of discussion soon turn to the war when Life tells Mr. Platt about their encounter earlier that day.

Mr. Platt: "Lawlessness has run wild, common decency between people has disappeared, every man is armed against his neighbor."

Life: "In Redding we still have law and order"

Mr. Platt: "We should have it here, too. There are plenty of Loyalists in Westchester County, but there's no control. Rebel and Tory live almost in open warfare with each other."

Life: "I'm happy we haven't got to that point in Redding"

Mr. Platt: "You're fortunate. People have been tarred and feathered here, houses have been burned and livestock slaughtered."

Life: "What about the party that escorted us here?"

Mr. Platt: "That's one of our Committees of Safety. They're all about we have to keep order."

Even though Southwestern Connecticut was considered a "Tory" heavy region, the Loyalists of Redding did not endure the hardships that other Loyalists experienced in other parts of the Colonies. There were isolated incidents of violence but overall Loyalists in Redding fared better than most. The purpose of the conversation between Mr. Platt and Life is to make us aware of these issues.

Tim's conversation with his cousin Ezekiel highlights that fact that the war and whose right still troubles him.

Tim: "Are you a Loyalist?"

Ezekiel: "Of course. Aren't you?"

Tim: "I guess so, only sometimes I'm not sure. Sam's fighting for the Rebels, did you know that?"

Ezekiel: "My father doesn't think he was so smart for joining the Rebels. They'll likely be hung when the war's over."

Tim: "Maybe they'll win"

Ezekiel: "They can't. How can they beat the whole British army?"

Tim: "Well I don't know, the way Sam explains it, it sounds right to be a Rebel. And when Father explains it, it sounds right to be a Loyalist. Although if you want to know the truth, I don't think Father really cares. He's just against wars."

Once they reach Verplancks Point Tim is impressed by the beauty and vastness of the Hudson River. Life, negotiates successfully and they are ready to make their trip home with a full wagon of goods:

Tim narrating: "He had got a good price for the cattle and had negotiated for most of the other things he wanted to bring back to Redding. It was a good wagonload: two hogshead of rum, a half dozen big sacks of salt, a couple of barrels of molasses; a large chest of tea, a sack of coffee beans, a dozen brass kettles and some tin pots; a chest of breeches and some brass buckles; some drills, knives, files, axes and spades; and small boxes of pepper, allspice, cinnamon, and white powdered sugar."

Life wants to avoid heading back through Ridgebury on the return trip, having heard of a drover from Norfield that had been shot on the Ridgebury Road two days earlier, but a sudden snow storm forces them to return the way they came and they eventually make their way back to the Platt's farm in North Salem.

Chapter IX: Summary and Analysis

Tim wakes up to a warm sunny day and a foot of snow, conditions that would be wonderful back at the tavern but are far from optimum when you're in charge of an ox drawn cart. Tim is aware of the troubles they will face on the road but is more concerned with Cow-boys:

Tim: "Are we going to have an escort?"

Life: "I don't know, Platt rode out last night to arrange one, but with the snow, people may not want to ride. But that works two ways- the raiders may not want to ride, either. You work the oxen; I'm going to ride ahead."

Life is correct, no one wants to ride, they have no escort for their return trip.

Tim narrating: "Father would ride a mile or two and then ride back to see how I was doing; and then he'd ride out again. That way if he ran into the cow-boys he could race back to me and we could find a place to hide...the only trouble with this plan was that there usually weren't any woods close to the road."

After a short break for lunch, they make it to Ridgebury and decide to keep right on moving:

Tim narrating: "We got through Ridgebury all right. Some people came to the tavern door and stared at us as we went through. I guess they thought it queer to see us trying to travel in that snow. Father looked grim, "If nobody knew we were around before, they do now." He said. Then we got out of the village and he rode on ahead again, scouting.

Tim does his best to keep his mind off the predicament they're in by trying to name all the countries in the world. He ponders whether he would count America or not if the Rebels won the war, he finally decides his father is right about the Rebel's losing and chooses not to count America. This is symbolic of Tim's position on the war and the faith he has in his Father's judgement subsequent to the events he has endured in the past few days.

His name game continues until he suddenly realizes that he has not seen his father in quite a while. The narrative of the chapter is exceptional from this point forward, you feel like you are there with Tim. His mind races through all the possible explanations:

Tim: "Maybe it only seemed like a long time...Maybe being involved with listing all those countries gave me a funny idea of time...Father could have met someone he knew and started talking...He could have stopped at a farmhouse to get us something to eat...Maybe Father got hurt in an accident..."

Feeling scared and lonely he pulls the oxen off to the side of the road and clears some snow for them so they can graze on some weeds and then races off to find his father. The fact that Tim takes the time to clear a patch of grazing space for the oxen shows us he is responsible. Tim

follows his father's horse tracks to a hemlock grove and there realizes what has happened to his father:

Tim narrating: "I plowed on until I came to where the hemlocks began to border the road, casting a cool shadow on the snow. There it was written out for me to see as plain as if I were reading it in a book. The road was all a turmoil of mud and snow marked with dozens of hoof-prints. There were more hoof-prints in the hemlock grove; and then going on up the road away from me the tracks of three or four horses. The cow-boys had lain in ambush in the hemlock groves, jumped father, and taken him away."

Tim has a decision to make: *what now?* His initial thought is to run home alone "I could make it home in three hours if I pushed", next he asked himself: *what would Sam do?* "The most daring thing to do would be to track down Father," He quickly realizes that isn't the smartest thing to do, and finally decides to do what his father would do: "get the wagon and the load of goods back home...so we'd have something to run the store and the tavern on through the winter."

As the sun sets behind him, Tim makes his way down the road. He knows that he will eventually have to face the cow-boys and he will have to outsmart them in order to make it back home.

Tim narrating: "They were sitting on horseback in the middle of the road about twenty yards ahead of me- three black figures stock still in the night. The sight of those unmoving figures shocked me, and I almost ran. But I didn't..."

Tim narrating: "I stopped the oxen up and walked forward a few paces. Then the man with the lantern leaned forward to let the light shine on me. "It's the boy," he said."

Tim: "Yes, sir, Father said that the escort would be along soon, but when you didn't come I was worried that the cow-boys would get me first."

Bandit #2: "We're not the-"

Bandit #1: "Shut up, Carter. Come here boy...When did your Father say the es- we'd be here?"

Tim: "He figured you be here an hour ago. That's why I was so worried. He told me not to worry, but I couldn't help it. He said when the shooting started to fall flat and I'd be alright...I thought there'd be more of you, though. Father said there'd be at least a half dozen men in the escort. He said just fall flat when the shooting started."

Tim's story makes the bandits uneasy and two immediately become apprehensive:

Bandit #2: "I don't like this. It sounds like an ambush."

Bandit #1: "Are you going to get scared off by a boy's story?"

Bandit #3: "I don't like this. Let's go."

Bandit #1: "Are both of you going to be scared off by a boy's story."

Bandit #3: "It isn't worth the risk, Judson, Let's leave."

Bandit #1: "Not worth the risk? There's a hundred pounds worth of stuff in that wagon."

Bandit #2: "Judson, stealing rum is a hanging matter. I don't want to-"

Just then, a dog barks in the distance and starts the oxen bawling which sends the bandits galloping off through the snow.

Tim narrating: "I stood for a moment listening to the sound of their hooves dying out on the snowy road, and then I began to laugh and cry all at once...I felt terrific, because I'd fooled them; it would be a great story to tell Sam. But everything else was awful- Father being gone and me being alone in the snow and dark and hours to go before I got home."

The method Tim employs to outsmart the bandits is innovative and witty, a plan that neither Sam nor his Father would have come up with. Tim has evolved into a man on this trip, maturing personally and mentally via the tests this trip has presented him with.

Chapter X: Summary and Analysis

With Life and Sam gone, Tim and his Mother are forced to work long hours to keep things afloat at the tavern; They even have to work Sundays, which Tim knows is a sin. But as we've learned throughout the story, Tim is more concerned with the issues he's dealing with than his religious obligations.

Tim narrating: "Now half the family was gone and our lives were really changed. Mother and I had all the work to do, which meant that there was hardly any time off for either of us. We even had to work on Sunday, which was a sin. "God, will forgive us, Tim," Mother said. "Don't worry about it, I'm sure of that." I didn't tell her that I wasn't worried."

"But the work worried me all right. There was so much to do- old Pru and the chickens and sheep to take care of and the spring, planting the corn and greens we needed for the tavern, and the cleaning and the cooking. And of course somebody had to be at the tap all the time to draw beer and serve meals to travelers and make up beds for people who came through needing a place to sleep."

Tim goes on to explain the frustration and hardship businesses faced in the Revolutionary period.

Tim narrating: "...So business seemed good, but actually it wasn't, because a lot of people- the ones on official business- paid in commissary notes which were just pieces of paper that wouldn't be worth anything at all unless the Rebels won."

"Business was good at the store, too....But even that didn't help much. Prices kept going up and up, and depreciation of the paper money took a lot of the profit out of it."

"The whole thing really made me feel pretty sick, working that hard from sunrise to sunset and never being able to get ahead. But there was nothing we could do about it except to pray every night that the war would end soon, and Father and Sam would come home again."

The Collier brothers have masterfully made us aware of the two financial burdens businesses were faced with during the Revolution via Tim's narration about the tavern (commissary notes) and the store (paper money).

Payments in commissary notes were no more than IOU's, as there was no guarantee that payments would be made if the Patriots did not win the war. And even if the Patriots did win the war reimbursements would not be paid *until* the conclusion of the war which was unknown; Claims for reimbursement on record in New York State range from 1782 and 1794. This was compounded by currency inflation caused by the over the issue of paper money. In 1775, the Continental Congress chose to finance the war through the printing of bills of credit (paper currency receivable for future taxes), inexplicably the States never levied taxes for these bills and printed their own bills to match the Continental bills. This caused a disastrous situation in the colonies that was difficult to remedy initially because for the first two years of the war it was considered a crime against patriotism to even admit that the Continental dollar was sinking in value. When it became clear that the Continental dollar had depreciated (it had sunk to 66% of a

specie dollar), states made it a crime to refuse paper money, demand a premium in paper, or charge lower prices for specie (hard cash, coins). Punishments included public humiliation, fines, imprisonment, and the forfeiture or confiscation of the goods or property concerned.

Susannah does her best to alert Sam of the situation they are in. She hopes that if he knows that his Father has been captured or maybe even killed he'll come home and help manage things.

Susannah: "He should be tired of playing soldier boy by now, I should think that glory would have worn off."

Tim isn't so optimistic Sam will change his mind about the war.

Tim narrating: "He'd got himself set to win the war and throw the British out of the country so we could be free, and when Sam was determined he usually stuck to things."

"I wasn't exactly sure he'd come home even when he finally found out that Father was gone. There was only one way to find out, so we kept trying to get messages to him."

Tim continues to contemplate the different positions on the war and cannot seem to find any way the English government has hurt him personally. In the process he explains that his minister, Mr. Beach, continues to pray for the King and Parliament even though the Assembly has declared it treason to do so. Mr. Beach did just that in real life and was threatened by Patriots on several occasions, he was one of very few Anglican ministers that continued to hold church services and openly pray for the King during the Revolution.

[Example of Prayer for King: "may God keep and strengthen in the true worshipping of thee, in righteousness and holiness of life, thy servant GEORGE, our most gracious King and Governour" *Book of Common Prayer*, England: John Baskerville, c. 1762]

Tim realizes that he has changed since the cattle drive to Verplancks, he no longer procrastinates or tries to get out of his chores, he now plans how he can get things done.

Tim narrating: "That morning after the terrible trip home, right from the first moment we got finished saying grace, I began planning the things I had to do- which things had to be done first and what was the best way to get them done...I wasn't acting my usual self, I was acting more like a grownup."

For a moment he's proud of himself and starts to think about showing off to Sam (when he gets home) but his thoughts quickly turn to the fact that his Father is not there and it's all the fault of the Rebels for starting the war.

Tim narrating: "I'd get angry with the Rebels for starting the war and angry with Sam for going to play soldier and have the glory while I had to do all the work at home. It wasn't fair."

Tim's thoughts echo those of any American who did not support the war, yet suffered through it's consequences. The one thing he has yet to experience is the war up close, but that changes one Saturday morning in April, 1777 while he is tending to the kitchen garden by the side of the house.

Tim narrating: "I began hearing from a long way away a heavy muttering noise. It sounded a bit like thunder, but not exactly. It made me uneasy. I jammed the spade in the ground and went out front of the tavern to have a look up and down the road. The sound seemed to be coming from the southwest over behind the church somewhere...And then I saw Ned, Samuel Smith's Negro, come running up the road. At the same moment Captain Betts, popped out of his house next door. Captain Betts was in the Rebel militia. "What is it, Ned" he shouted. "British Troops, Captain," Ned shouted. He ran on by."

"The noise grew louder. I watched, and all at once through the hedgerows I caught a glimpse of movement and things flashing. In a moment the vanguard appeared around the bend...On down the road toward me they came. It was a frightening thing to see. They just kept coming on and on as if nothing in the world could stop them."

With the war in his front yard, Tim experiences many realities in a short frame of time:

1. The British troops are numerous, organized, and impressive looking: "Oh, those troops were impressive looking with all those belts and buckles and powder horns and bayonets and so forth dangling about their red uniforms. How could people like Sam expect to beat them?"
2. There are split loyalties in his own neighborhood: "It gave me a funny feeling to realize that while Mr. Heron was giving the British officers rum and beef, Captain Betts and Mr. Rogers were sitting a hundred yards away trying out a way to kill them."
3. That he is a Tory. "Suddenly I realized that I was (a Tory). Father's capture had done that."
4. War turns men into beasts. "At first when the troops had arrived, swaggering around so bold and gay, I had really admired them. But seeing them take Jerry Sanford off like that gave me a sick feeling in my stomach."
5. He doesn't want to be a Tory anymore. After watching the British take Jerry, kill Ned and the others in Captain Starr's house he realizes that neither side of the war is worthy of his support.

Chapter XI: Summary and Analysis

The British march on toward Danbury and Tim returns to the tavern which is filled with townspeople who have come to talk about the British raid. This exemplifies that a tavern was more than a drinking establishment, it was an important community gathering place.

As Tim listens to a wounded man explain why he came to Redding, he becomes hopeful that Sam will be in Redding shortly when the man says that both General Arnold troops and General Silliman's troops have been chasing the British up from Compo. He goes to the window to look for Sam but instead sees Captain Betts racing toward the tavern, the British have let him go. When Betts hears they have killed Dan Starr and burned down his house with others in it, he tells Tim to ring the Church bell. Ringing the Church bell will alert the local militia to muster for action.

Tim doesn't want to do it, but knows he has to obey. His mother won't allow it, she's had enough.

Susannah: "No, no, not my boy. You don't involve anymore Meekers in this terrible war. Send your own child out there to play soldier if you want, Stephen Betts, but no more of mine."

Betts: "Where's your patriotism, woman?"

Susannah: "Bah, patriotism. Your patriotism has got my husband in prison and one of my children out there in the rain and muck shooting people and likely to be dead any minute, and my business is half ruined. Go sell your patriotism elsewhere, I've had enough of it."

When everyone has left she takes Tim by the hand and asks him to pray with her.

Susannah: "Oh, Lord, please take this war away from here. What have we done to endure this? Why must it go on for so long?"

The war does not go away, it returns in an hour, this time it's the Continental Troops. In comparison to the British troops Tim doesn't find the Patriots all that impressive.

Tim narrating: "General David Wooster was head of the Connecticut militia. I'd never seen a general up close before, and as I brought the rum and water I looked him over. I was disappointed: he wasn't very glorious-looking- just a tired old man who was worried and frowning."

Suddenly the tavern door crashes open again and this time it is General Benedict Arnold. While Tim listens in on their conversation, he is confused and intrigued by their friendly references to William Heron, but he is more concerned about another matter...Sam may be back in Redding.

Tim narrating: "I went through the kitchen out to the barnyard, and then around to the front. It was full dark and the rain was spitting against me, soaking my face. Across the road some troops stood in the church doorway smoking pipes. I crossed over. A soldier barred my way. "I'm looking for Sam Meeker," I said. "Is he here?"

Sam *is* in the church and briefly the brothers embrace in a teary hug, but the conversation soon changes to the events of the past two years and the imprisonment of their Father.

Sam: "You've changed, Tim"

Tim: "I'm more of a grownup, now."

Sam: "I can see that. Has it been hard on you and Mother?"

Tim: "We even have to work on Sundays, Sam, what have they done with Father?"

Sam: "I don't know. Put him in prison, probably."

Tim: "Don't you feel bad about Father being in prison, Sam?"

Sam explains that he has tried to find out where their Father is and that he does feel terrible about the fight they had over his decision to fight for the Patriots, but that was two years ago and he's moved on. Tim urges him to keep trying to locate him before he relents to avoid a fight with Sam.

Tim heads back into the house to get his Mother. She's been alone in the tavern and is not too pleased with Tim for being gone for so long:

Susannah: "Where have you been?"

Tim: "There's something wrong with Old Pru's leg. I think you better come out and look at it."

Susannah: "It will have to wait."

Tim: "I think you ought to look at it now, Mother."

Tim narrating: "It wasn't like me to insist on anything that way and she got the idea. "All right, just a moment," she said. "See if the gentlemen need more rum." I filled the glasses and helped her clear the plates, and then we went out through the kitchen into the barnyard. "What's happened, Tim?"

Tim: "Sam's in the barn."

As with Tim and Sam's reunion in the church, Susannah and Sam embrace and clear the air about his decision to leave the family then the conversation quickly turns to Life's absence and the war.

Susannah: "Sam, you have to come home. We need you. Your people have taken Father from us; they'll have to give us you in return."

Sam: "Mother, I can't come home. That's desertion, they hang people for that."

Susannah: "When is your enlistment up, Sam?"

Sam: "In two months. But I'm going to reenlist...It's my duty to stay and fight."

Susannah: "You have a duty to your family, too."

Sam: "My duty to my country comes first...For God's sake, Mother, people are out there dying for you."

Susannah: "Well they can stop dying, I don't need anybody's death."

Tim: "Let him alone, Mother, he isn't going to change his mind."

Tim narrating: "We watched him go, knowing that we might never see him again...I had a funny feeling about seeing Sam. It wasn't that he was more grown-up or that I was more grown-up. It was something else. For the first time in my life I knew that Sam was wrong about something...He was staying in the army, not because of duty or anything else. He liked the excitement of it...It felt good to be a part of it, and I knew that was the real reason why he didn't want to come home...I didn't feel like his little brother so much anymore, I felt more like his equal."

Chapter Eleven doesn't require much analysis, it speaks volumes through the conversations of the characters. Tim's growth as a man continues, building upon his cattle drive experiences which toughened him up, his experiences during the British troop's march through Redding Ridge have hardened his position on the war and life in general.

Chapter XII: Summary and Analysis

Tim and Susannah learn that Life is dead; he died on a British prison ship, not a Patriot ship, as they had thought. They buried him someplace on Long Island, and it was not likely the family would be able to figure out where. During the Revolution, some 11,500 Americans died in British prison ships anchored in Wallabout Bay, on the Brooklyn Side of New York Harbor. Each morning, prisoners collected the dead from the ships, where diseases like yellow fever and smallpox were rampant, and buried them in shallow graves along the shore.

Life's last words were: "Tell them that I love the, and say that I forgive Sam, he's a brave boy but he's headstrong. And now I go to enjoy the freedom war has brought me." Life's final comment, perhaps in delayed response to Sam's quote in Chapter One: "It's worth dying to be free."

Two days later Betsy brings news that Jerry Sanford has died on a prison ship too.

Betsy: "Nobody understands it....you can understand why they took Mr. Rogers and Captain Betts, but why imprison a ten-year-old boy?"

Susannah: "What harm could he have done them? This war has turned men into animals...they're animals now, they're all beasts."

Betsy: "I think they are, Sam should come home."

The way Life and Jerry die hammers home the fact that war creates illogical decisions and circumstances. Tim is well aware of this now and doesn't want any part of either side of the war.

Tim: "I decided that I wasn't going to be on anybody's side any more: neither one of them was right."

All in all Tim has had it with the war completely.

Tim narrating: "Oh how I hated the war. All of life was like running on a treadmill. I was fourteen, I should have been going to school all this while and learning something. Maybe by this time I would have begun to think about going to New Haven to study at Yale. I wasn't much interested in Latin or Greek, but in the last couple of years I'd learned a lot about buying and selling and the tavern business, and I wanted to study calculating and surveying and the agricultural sciences: I thought I might have a career in business. I might apprentice myself to a merchant in New Haven or New York, or even London, to learn the art of trade. Sam owed it to me to come home and help Mother run the tavern for a couple years while I started to make my way in the world."

Tim's daydreams of school and a better life come in the midst of depressing circumstances at the tavern. Prices continued to rise, merchandise was dwindling, and the Rebels now had control of northern Westchester which included Verplancks so the annual cattle drive was out of the question. Tim knows he must find a British commissary in order to keep the tavern and the store in business. He wants to sell to the British not because he wants to help them but because the British paid in hard money.

Tim narrating: "All through November I tried to find out about the British commissary- whether it really existed or not, and where it actually was...I didn't want to go until I was sure: If I ran into Rebels I'd lose the cattle and probably be put in prison myself. It was only worth the risk if I were sure where the commissary was: otherwise we might just as well eat the cattle ourselves."

Tim's search for the commissary comes to a halt on December 3, 1778; Sam has returned to Redding.

Tim narrating: "He looked thin and tired. There were black circles under his eyes and his uniform was torn in about six places. He'd lost his belt and was wearing a piece of rope around his waist, and his hat wasn't an army hat but just an ordinary fur cap."

The description of Sam is an accurate portrayal of a Patriot soldier in the fall of 1778; Each soldier was provided with one uniform for the entire year and thus after twelve months of marching and fighting these uniforms were well worn and raggedy.

In the winter of 1778-79, the Continental Army wintered in Redding, Connecticut. As Sam states, they were situated so they could quickly move West or East to protect the Hudson River and the Coast of Long Island, a secondary reason behind their position was the Military Depot in Danbury which the British had raided in 1777.

Sam's concern about his family's cattle and his attempts to convince Tim to slaughter them and hide them or sell the meat to the troops are driven by what Sam has experienced as a soldier. He knows that the soldiers on both sides are desperate for solid food and will break laws both moral and legal to satisfy their hunger.

Sam: "Have you got any cattle, Tim?"

Tim: "Eight, they're not much to look at."

Sam: "Butcher them and hide the meat. Or sell it. You can get a good price for the hides from the troops. Sell what you can.. I promise you, the stock will be stolen...Tim, butcher the cattle. Let the meat freeze and hide it in the loft under the hay until you need it...I'm warning you, Tim, sooner or later somebody's going to get them"

Tim doesn't listen, business at the tavern is good since the soldiers arrived, but they are still being paid with commissary notes. If they want to purchase more liquor and supplies they will need hard cash and that can only come from selling the cattle to the British. Tim and his Mother know that they must make a decision but choose to wait out the month of January, because of rumors about the British in New York City and the chance that the Continentals may be called on to fight soon.

While Sam, Tim and Susannah sit around the taproom fireplace discussing the war and what Sam thinks will happen in the spring, they hear some commotion outside.

Tim narrating: "Suddenly he stopped talking. "What was that?" I'd heard it too- a kind of thump and then a cow bawling. We listened. There were noises coming from outside somewhere.

"Sounds like something's bothering the cattle," I said.
"There are people out there," Sam shouted. "Let's go."

We ran out through the kitchen toward the barn. It was dark, but there was nearly a full moon reflected on the snow and plenty enough light to see what had happened. The barn doors were open. Two cows were standing in front of the barn blinking, and we could see two more behind...four of the cows were gone.

"Pen 'em up," Sam shouted. "They'll be butchering the others somewhere near." He darted around the house toward the road, his eyes following the hoof prints in the snow.

I snatched up a shovel and drove the remaining four cattle back into the barn with the handle...Then I raced across the snow around the house to the road...I saw nothing, but distantly I heard the noise of shouting, off toward the far end of the training ground. I ran in the direction of the sounds, and then suddenly I saw three men walking toward me through the moonlight, side by side. I stopped and waited. They came up. The one in the middle was Sam. His nose bleeding and there was a cut in his chin. His hands were tied behind his back.

"Timmy, get Colonel Parsons," he cried. "They're taking me in as a cattle thief." I went cold. Then I turned and ran."

Sam is being framed as a cattle thief by his own troops, another illogical circumstance caused by the war. Throughout the novel Sam has placed his country and fellow patriots ahead of his own family and now in a twist of fate he faces court martial and the possibility of death by execution for attempting to recover his family's stolen cattle.

Chapter XIII: Summary and Analysis

Having no luck at Colonel Parsons' headquarters, Tim locates the missing cows and drives them back home. He returns to the tavern where his mother is waiting and after telling her the bad news, they pray.

Tim narrating: "Mother was sitting in front of the fire, looking worried. "I saw you coming across the road," she said. "Where's Sam?"

"They arrested him," I said. "The ones who stole the cattle beat him up, and then they said he'd stolen the cattle himself and marched him off somewhere."

"Back to the encampment?"

"I guess so," I said. "They'll let him go in the morning, won't they? I mean all we have to do is explain it, don't we?"

She shook her head. "I have a terrible foreboding, Timothy. I want to pray."

Susannah's fear is validated the next morning when Tim returns to Parsons' headquarters. There is more to Sam's arrest than just whose right or wrong. "Defection from Duty" has become an issue for the Continental troops and to put an end to it General Putnam wants to make an example of somebody to show what happens to defectors under his command.

Tim narrating: "In the morning I went back to Captain Betts' house to talk to Colonel Parsons...I told him the story, but he shrugged..."He didn't do it, sir. These other men - -" He held his hand up to stop me. "I know, you told me that. In any case there isn't anything I can do. They've taken him out to the encampment, and it'll be up to General Putnam to do what he wants. I'd get out there in a hurry, though. The General is determined to make an example of somebody. It could go hard with Sam. General Putnam is a great and dedicated patriot and he does not take defection from duty lightly."

After a brief discussion about which one of them will go to the encampment and who will watch the tavern, Susannah heads down the road and Tim ponders butchering the rest of the cattle. In this narration Tim explains that taverns were required by law to remain open and serve travelers. Because of their great importance to the community, there were many laws and regulations regarding taverns in the colonial period.

When Susannah finally returns, she is cold, tired and hopeless. The meeting with General Putnam did not go well.

Susannah: "You see what the problem is, Tim. Those two men who brought him in have sworn it was Sam who stole the animals...Sam wasn't supposed to be here; he was supposed to be on duty with Colonel Parsons at the Betts' house."

Tim: "But Colonel Parsons didn't care, he always let Sam come over and visit."

Susannah: "Still, he wasn't supposed to. Officially Sam had deserted his post."

Colonel Read: "I've been down to the encampments. I've talked with some of the officers there. I'm afraid it looks bad for Sam."

Tim: "Why is it bad for Sam, sir?"

Colonel Read: "Here's the problem. Those soldiers Sam caught with the cattle are scared to death Putnam will simply decide to hang them all as an example. They're prepared to tell any kind of lie about Sam to get themselves off. If it were just Sam's word against somebody else's, it might be different, but there are two of them, and if they tell the same story, they can be convincing." He shook his head. "Then there's the fact that Sam comes from a Tory family."

Tim: "But won't there be a trial, sir?"

Colonel Read: "Oh yes, a regular court-martial. There'll be a presiding justice and a board of officers acting as the jury. But we have to face the fact that the board will do whatever they think General Putnam wants."

Tim: "What can we do?"

Colonel Read: "Pray."

The trial was set for February 6th, an agonizing three week period for both Tim and his mother. When the day finally arrives Tim is so nervous that he cannot eat, or even sit still. Colonel Read arrives after dark with the news they didn't want to hear.

Colonel Read: "Mrs. Meeker, I have bad news. They're going to execute Sam."

Tim immediately goes to see Colonel Parsons.

Tim narrating: "I can't help you," he said bluntly. "The court-martial has decided and that's the end of it."

"Then who can help me, sir." I demanded.
He stared at me. "General Putnam. Nobody but General Putnam."

Tim and Colonel Parsons debate why Parsons should give Tim a note to see General Putnam and Tim makes some pretty good "telling points" because in the end Parsons agrees to give him a letter to see General Putnam.

Parsons: "Because I happen to believe you, I'm going to give you a letter to see General Putnam. But I am warning you right now that it won't do a bit of good. The one thing General Putnam cannot do at this point is how clemency. If he is going to make his point with the troops, he can't start letting people off easily."

Tim narrating: "He took up a piece of paper, wrote something on it swiftly, folded it and sealed it, and addressed it to General Putnam. Then he gave it to me and I left, running."

"I ran most of the way out to the encampment over the packed snow...I handed my letter to the guard...he took it and he called over a soldier. "Take this boy to General Putnam," he said.

As they make their way to General Putnam's hut, Tim very accurately describes the encampment and the activities of the soldiers.

"General Putnam was sitting behind a rough trestle table they'd set up as desk...He was a big man of about sixty, with lots of white hair. He wore the Continental uniform of buff and blue. He did not look kind."

Putnam: "Meeker?"

Tim: "Yes, sir."

Putnam: "All right, let's have it."

Tim: "Sam wouldn't steal our own cattle. He just wouldn't. He's been fighting for three years, he's been a good soldier. And he didn't do it, sir, I swear it. I know because --"

Putnam: "Enough, my time's valuable. I'll consider it. That'll be all."

Tim is allowed to visit Sam in the stockade, which was a short visit but just long enough for Tim to learn what really happened that night.

Sam: "They knew they were in for it right from the moment I spotted them in the training ground. I only saw one of them at first, and I leveled the musket at him. But the other one was down on the ground in the shadows, gutting the cow, and he came up behind me and stuck his knife point against my back. So they got me. Then they bashed me around a little and took me in. Oh, they were smart. They had a story all worked out about hearing somebody shout "Stop Thief" and seeing me driving the cattle across the training ground, and coming out to get me. And of course I wasn't supposed to be home, anyway. I was supposed to be on duty at the Betts' house. So that went against me. And that was that."

Chapter XIV: Summary and Analysis

On Saturday, February 13th, Colonel Read came up from the encampment to let Tim and Susannah know that General Putnam had refused their plea for clemency. The unfairness of war is voiced by both Tim and Colonel Read as it is a very important theme in the novel.

Tim is too emotional to sit through the church service for Sam and the others, his Mother is too depressed to even attend.

Susannah: "I'm not going, they can murder who they like, church who they like, but I'm not going. For me the war is over."

The tavern is closed and as far as Susannah is concerned it can remain that way. Tim, feeling angry and bitter, sharpens his father's bayonet with the intention of heading to the encampment to free Sam.

Susannah: "Going to get yourself killed, son?"

Tim: "I'm going to save my brother"

Susannah: "No, you're going to get yourself killed. Well you might as well. Let's have it all done with at once. How does that old line go? Men must fight and women must weep, but you'll get no more tears from me. I've done my weeping for this war."

As they have done in Chapter 13, the Collier brothers paint a picture of the encampment at Redding via Tim's narrative. Tim's comments about the lack of trees, the lines of huts, the muddy road, the corrals, etc... are written for more than dramatic effect. In real-life there were not many trees left in the encampments of Redding during the winter of 1778-79, there were lines of huts, muddy roads, wagons and cannons, officer's quarters. They even place the prisoners in the correct location. The 1778-79 guardhouse was not located within the encampment, but on a road in close proximity to General Putnam's headquarters. So we are given a glimpse of the winter encampment through Tim's eyes and entertained by the well orchestrated climatic representation of Tim sneaking around the encampment, stalking guards and dodging bullets as a bonus really.

Tim narrating: "I began to slip down the steep hillside from stump to boulder...I stopped and I stared. I couldn't see anybody moving around...I glanced at the guard...he didn't move for several moments...and I suddenly realized that he was asleep. I took the bayonet out of my belt and clutched it tight in my hand. If Sam could killed people, so could I...I stood up and charged...the guard stirred. I drove my feet faster..."Halt." He shouted. He swept the musket up, the bayonet pointing straight at me, twenty feet away..."Sam" I shouted, and "Sam" again as loud as I could. The guard lunged at me. I lifted the bayonet and threw it in the air. It flashed in the moonlight, spinning lazily over and over and fell into the stockade. Then I turned and began racing as fast as I could across the snow for the safety of the boulders on the hillside. I had gone only three paces when the musket went off with a terrific roar...I dashed onto the slope, and then began staggering upward, zigzagging from boulder to boulder to keep protection at my back. Behind me there was shouting and running and the sound of a horse being wheeled around...I reached the trees at the top of the ridge and flung myself flat. They'd never get me now...I rolled

over and looked down...I stared into the stockade. There was no action there, no people moving at all. Lying in the center of that square of snow, something shiny glistened in the moonlight. And I knew it had all been a waste. The prisoners weren't in the stockade anymore."

Tim has a bullet wound to show for his efforts at the encampment, but nothing severe. The following day is Sam's execution and Tim attends knowing Sam would want somebody there, Susannah refuses to go. Tim's narration of the executions is straight forward, he simply tells us what happened. A sad, abrupt ending, much like the life's of many soldiers during the War of Independence.

Sam's execution at the hands of his own troops is symbolic of the atrocities of war, it is also an accurate portrayal of actions that needed to be taken by Generals like Israel Putnam in the early stages of the American Revolution. The more horrific these executions were, the less likely the soldiers who viewed them would be to disobey their Generals orders later.