Analysis of Accounts: The Battle of Lexington

Using your analysis of accounts form for the three separate accounts regarding the Battle of Lexington you are to source and check for internal and external contradictions.

**Account A**

19th. At 2 o’clock we began our march by wading through a very long stream up to our middles. About 5 miles away from a town called Lexington, we heard there were some hundreds of people collected together intending to oppose us. At 5 o’clock we arrived there and saw a number of people, I believe between 200 and 300, formed in a common in the middle of the town. We still continued advancing, prepared for an attack though without intending to attack them. As we came near them, they fired one or two shots, upon which our men without any orders, fired and put them to flight. We then formed on the Common, but with some difficulty, the men were so wild they could hear no orders; we waited a considerable time there, and at length proceeded on our way to Concord.

**Account B**

We Nathaniel Mulliken, Philip Russell, (Followed by the names of 32 other men present on Lexington Green on April 19, 1775)…All of lawful age, and inhabitants of Lexington…do testify and declare, that on the nineteenth of April, about five o’clock in the morning, we proceeded towards the Green, and saw a large body of troops marching towards us. Some of our men were coming to the Green, and others had reached it, at which time, they began to disperse. While our backs were turned on the British troops, they fired on us, and a number of our men were instantly killed and wounded, not a gun was fired by any person in our company on the British soldiers to our knowledge before they fired on us, and continued firing until we had all made our escape.

1. Are there any internal contradictions?
2. Are there any external contradictions?
3. Do both of the authors agree on the event?
4. Which account would be considered reliable?

**Account C**

By the morning of April 19, 1775, the king’s troops reached Lexington. As they neared the town, the saw 70 minutemen drawn up in lines on the village green. The British commander ordered the minutemen to leave, and the colonists began to move out without laying down their muskets. Then someone fired, and the British soldiers sent a volley of shots into the departing militia. Eight minutemen were killed and ten more wounded, but only one British soldier was injured. The Battle of Lexington lasted only 15 minutes.

Danzer, 2003, *The Americans.* Evanston, IL. McDougal Littell.

1. What is different about account C compared to the others?
2. What are some of the claims that the author makes in this account?

ANALYSIS OF WRITTEN/VISUAL HISTORIC ACCOUNTS

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| 1 | TYPE OF ACCOUNT  What type of account is this? Use titles and other text or visual features to figure out the type of the document.(Common types: newspaper article, map, poem, song, census report, autobiography, biography, code of laws, painting, tax or merchant records, advertisement, photograph, diary, blog…) |
| 2 | DATE(S) OF THE ACCOUNT  When was the account created? Give a specific date if possible. If not, give a range of dates. |
| 3 | AUTHOR OR CREATOR OF THE ACCOUNT  Who wrote or created this account? Write the name and title of the person if available. Keep in mind that sometimes the author may be a company or organization, and the account may not have a single author. |
| 4 | INTENDED AUDIENCE  For what audience was the account originally produced? |
| 5 | OTHER INFORMATION   1. List three things that the author said that you think are important. 2. Why do think this account was originally created? What is its purpose? 3. What evidence in the account helps you understand its purpose? Either quote from the document or provide other evidence. 4. List two things that the account tells you about life in the time and place in which it was produced. 5. Write a question to the author that is left unanswered by this account. |

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