

CHAPTER X.

Early in the spring of 1779, two men named Cowley and Sawyer, were captured near Harpersfield, by four Schoharie Indians; Han-Yerry, who escaped from the Borsts the day before the Cobelskill engagement, Seth's-Henry, Adam, a sister's son, and Nicholas, also a relative. One of the captives, was a native of the Emerald Isle; and the other of the green hills of Scotland. They were among the number of refugees from Harpersfield, who sought safety in Schoharie at the beginning of difficulties.

The prisoners could not speak Dutch, which those Indians understood nearly as well as their own dialect; and the latter could understand but little, if any, of the conversation of those Anglo-Americans. When surprised, they intimated by signs as well as they could, that they were friends of the king; and not only evinced a willingness to proceed with their captors, but a desire to do so. An axe belonging to one of them was taken along as a prize. The prisoners set off with such apparent willingness on their long journey to Canada, that the Indians did not think it necessary to bind them. They were compelled to act, however, as "hewers of wood and drawers of water," for their red masters.

They had been captives eleven days, without a favorable opportunity to mature a plan for their escape, which they had all along premeditated. On arriving at a deserted hut near Tioga Point, the captives were sent to cut wood a few rods distant. On such occasions, one cut and the other carried it where it was to be consumed. While Cowley was chopping, and Sawyer waiting for an armful, the latter took from his pocket a newspaper, and pretended to read its contents to his fellow; instead of doing which, however, he proposed a plan for regaining their

liberty. After carrying wood enough to the hut to keep fire over night, and partaking of a scanty supper, they laid down in their usual manner to rest, a prisoner between two Indians.

The friends kept awake, and after they were satisfied their foes were all sound asleep, they arose agreeable to concert, and secured their weapons, shaking the priming from the guns. Sawyer with the tomahawk of Han-Yerry—who was thought the most desperate of the four—took his station beside its owner; while Cowley with the axe, placed himself beside another sleeping Indian. The fire afforded sufficient light for the captives to make sure of their victims. At a given signal the blows fell fatal upon two; the tomahawk sank deep into the brain of its owner, giving a sound, to use the words of an informant, * *like a blow upon a pumpkin*. Unfortunately, Sawyer drew the handle from his weapon in attempting to free it from the skull of the savage, and the remainder of the tragic act devolved upon his companion. The first one struck by Cowley was killed, but the blows which sent two to their final reckoning, awoke their fellows, who instantly sprang upon their feet. As Seth's-Henry rose from the ground, he received a blow which he partially warded off by raising his right arm; but his shoulder was laid open and he fell back stunned. The fourth, as he was about to escape, received a heavy blow in his back from the axe. He was pursued out of the hut—fled into a swamp near, where he died. The liberated prisoners returned into the hut, and were resolving on what course to pursue, when Seth's-Henry, who had recovered and feigned himself dead for some time, to embrace a favorable opportunity, sprang upon his feet—dashed through the fire—caught up his rifle, leveled and snapped it at one of his foes—ran out of the hut and disappeared.

The two friends then primed the remaining guns, and kept a vigilant watch until daylight, to guard against surprise. They set out in the morning to return, but dared not pursue the route

* *Lawrence Mattice*. The adventures of Cowley and Sawyer were principally derived from Mr. Mattice and Henry Hager, who learned the particulars from the captives themselves.

they came, very properly supposing there were more of the enemy not far distant, to whom the surviving Indian would communicate the fate of his comrades. They recrossed a river in the morning in a bark canoe, which they had used the preceding afternoon, and then directed their course for the frontier settlements. The first night after *taking the responsibility*, Cowley was light headed for hours, and his companion was fearful his raving would betray them; but when daylight returned, reason again claimed its tenement. As they had anticipated, a party of Indians thirsting for their blood, were in hot pursuit of them. From a hill they once descried ten or a dozen in a valley below. They remained concealed beneath a shelving rock one night and two days, while the enemy were abroad, and when there, a dog belonging to the latter, came up to them. As the animal approached, they supposed their hours were numbered; but after smelling them for some time, it went away without barking. On the third night after their escape, they saw fires lit by the enemy, literally all around them. They suffered much from exposure to the weather, and still more from hunger. They expected to be pursued in the direction they had been captured, and very properly followed a zig-zag course; arriving in safety after much suffering, at a frontier settlement in Pennsylvania, where they found friends. When fairly recruited they directed their steps to Schoharie, and were there welcomed as though they had risen from the dead, among which latter number, many had supposed them.

Sawyer is said to have died many years after, in Williamstown, Mass.; and Cowley in Albany. At the time Cowley and Sawyer returned from their captivity, the upper Schoharie fort was commanded by Maj. Posey, a large, fine looking officer, *who*, as an old lady of Schoharie county once declared to the author, *was the handsomest man she ever saw*.

Friendly Indians were sometimes in the habit of taking up a winter's residence in the vicinity of American frontier posts. In the spring of this year several Indians, who pretended friendship, left the Johnstown fort, where they had for some time been a tax-

on the charity of its officers; but they had gone but a few miles north of the garrison when they halted and murdered an old gentleman named Durham and his wife, whose scalps they could sell in an English market.—*James Williamson.*

The manuscript furnished the author by Judge Hager, states that in the year 1779, probably in the spring, a rumor reached the Schoharie forts that Capt. Brant, on the evening of a certain day, would arrive at some place on the Delaware river with a band of hostile followers. Col. Vrooman thereupon dispatched Capt. Jacob Hager with a company of about fifty men to that neighborhood. Hager arrived with his troops after a rapid march, at the place where it was said Brant was to pass—thirty or forty miles distant from Schoharie; and concealed them amidst some fall-en timber beside the road. This station was taken in the afternoon of the day on which Brant was expected to arrive, and continued to be occupied by the Americans until the following day between ten and eleven o'clock, when, no new evidence of Brant's visit being discovered, Capt. Hager returned home—thinking it possible that Brant was pursuing a different route to the Schoharie settlements.

Capt. Hager afterwards learned from a loyalist, in whose neighborhood he had been concealed, that he had not been gone an hour when the enemy about *one hundred and fifty* strong—Indians and tories, arrived and passed the fallow where he had been secreted. On being informed that a company of Americans had so recently left the neighborhood, preparations were made to pursue them. When about to move forward, Brant enquired of a tory named Sherman, what officer commanded the Americans, and on being informed that it was Capt. Hager, whose courage from a French war acquaintance was undoubted, he consulted his chiefs and the pursuit was abandoned.

Brant, on learning that Schoharie was well defended, seems to have given up the idea of surprising that settlement, and directed his steps to more vulnerable points of attack. Several settlements were entered simultaneously by the enemy along the Mohawk river early in the season—directed no doubt by this distinguished

chief. Apprised of Sullivan's intended march to the Indian country, he hurried back to prepare for his reception.

A party of Indians under the celebrated chief *Cornplanter*, appeared in the vicinity of Fort-Plain at this time, and after burning a small church not far from the fort, among other depredations, captured John Abeel an old inhabitant. They had traveled but a few miles before they discovered that he could talk their own language nearly as well as themselves. This discovery soon led to another of a more singular character, but truly fortunate for the captive, for on enquiring his name, Cornplanter knew at once he stood before *his own father*. Abeel had been a trader among the Indians some twenty-five years before in Western New York, and in one of his visits became enamored with a pretty squaw. The graceful warrior "*John*," called among his race *Cornplanter*, now before him, was the fruit of this libidinous, wayward affection. The chief had learned the history of his parentage from his mother, who called him by the christian name of her lover. A pleasing recognition followed, the father was instantly set at liberty, and conducted in safety to his own home.—*P. J. Wagner, Esq.*

Cornplanter visited his relatives at Fort-Plain, who were among the most respectable citizens in the Mohawk valley, several times after the war; and was treated with the civilities his dignified and manly bearing merited.

The repeated assaults along the whole frontier of New York and Pennsylvania during the preceding year by the enemy, arrested the attention of Congress, which resolved to send an army into the Indian country in the summer of 1779, and retaliate their atrocities by a destruction of their settlements. Accordingly, an army was assembled under Gen. Sullivan, at Tioga Point, at which place he was met by Gen. James Clinton, who marched from Canajoharie, on the Mohawk, with a division of the army. As a preliminary movement to the invasion of the Indian country by Gen. Sullivan, Col. Van Schaick went from Fort Schuyler, under the instructions of Gen. James Clinton, with detachments of his own and Col. Gansevoort's regiment, and destroyed the possessions of the Onondagas.

While Gen. Clinton was waiting at Canajoharie for his troops and supplies to assemble, and also for the construction of bateaux, two Tories were there hung, and a deserter shot. The following letter from Gen. Clinton to his wife, dated July 6th, 1779, briefly narrates the death of the two former :

"I have nothing further to acquaint you of, except that we apprehended a certain Lieut. Henry Hare, and a Sergeant Newbury, both of Col. Butler's regiment, who confessed that they left the Seneca country with sixty-three Indians, and two white men, who divided themselves into three parties—one party was to attack Schoharie, another party Cherry-Valley and the Mohawk river, and the other party to skulk about Fort Schuyler and the upper part of the Mohawk river, to take prisoners or scalps. I had them tried by a general court martial for spies, who sentenced them both to be hanged, which was done accordingly at Canajoharie, to the satisfaction of all the inhabitants of that place who were friends to their country, as they were known to be very active in almost all the murders that were committed on these frontiers. They were inhabitants of Tryon county, had each a wife and several children, who came to see them and beg their lives."

The name of Hare was one of respectability in the Mohawk valley, before the revolution. Members of the Hare family were engaged for years in sundry speculations with Maj. Jelles Fonda, who, as already observed, carried on an extensive trade with the Indians and fur traders at the western military posts; his own residence being at *Caughnawaga*.* Henry Hare resided before the war in the present town of Florida, a few miles from Fort Hunter. At the time he left the valley with the royalist party to go to Canada, his family remained, as did that of William Newbury, who

* All the territory on the north side of the Mohawk, from *The Nose to Tribe's Hill*, a distance of nearly ten miles, was called *Caughnawaga*—an Indian name, which signified *Stone in the water*. Some writers have given as its signification, "The coffin-shaped stone in the water." Tradition has handed down from a family which early settled on the bank of the river near this stone, the interpretation first given. This Indian name, we must suppose, originated long before this state was settled by the whites: of course the aborigines could have known nothing about coffins—they had no tools by which they could possibly make them. When the revolution began, Maj. Fonda was erecting buildings for the prosecution of business, six miles westward of his *Caughnawaga* residence, on a farm since known as the Schenck place. At a later day he built the dwelling now owned by C. McVean, Esq., so pleasantly situated on the hill in Fonda, where he died June 23d, 1791, aged 64 years.

lived about 3 miles from Hare, toward the present village of Glen. If Hare had rendered himself obnoxious to the whigs of Tryon county, Newbury had doubly so, by his inhuman cruelties at the massacre of Cherry-Valley, some of which, on his trial, were proven against him. Hare and Newbury visited their friends, and were secreted for several days at their own dwellings. The former had left home before daylight to return to Canada, and was to call for his comrade on his route. Maj. Newkirk, who resided but a short distance from Hare, met a tory neighbor on the afternoon of the day on which Hare left home, who either wished to be considered one of the knowing ones, or lull the suspicions resting upon himself, who communicated to him the fact that Hare had been home—and supposing him then out of danger, he added, “perhaps he is about home yet.” He also informed him that Newbury had been seen. Hare brought home for his wife several articles of clothing, such as British calicoes, dress-shawls, Indian mocasons, &c., and on the very day he set out to return to Canada, she was so imprudent as to put them on and go visiting—the sight of which corroborated the story told Newkirk. The Major notified Capt. Snooks, who collected a few armed whigs, and in the evening secreted himself with them near the residence of Hare, if possible, to give some further account of him. Providence seems to have favored the design, for the latter, on going to Newbury’s, had sprained an ankle. Not being willing to undertake so long a journey with a lame foot, and little suspecting that a friend had revealed his visit, he concluded to return to his dwelling. While limping along through his own orchard, Francis Putman, one of Snook’s party, then but 15 of 16 years old, stepped from behind an apple tree, presented his musket to his breast, and ordered him to stand. At a given signal, the rest of the party came up, and he was secured. They learned from the prisoner that Newbury had not yet set out for Canada, and a party under Lieut. Newkirk went the same night and arrested him. They were enabled to find his house in the woods by following a tame deer which fled to it. The prisoners were next day taken to Canajoharie, where they were tried by court martial, found guilty, and execut-

ed as previously shown. The execution took place near the present village of Canajoharie.* The influence exerted by the friends of Hare to save him would have been successful, had he declared that he visited the valley solely to see his family. He may have thought they dared not hang him; certain it is, that when he was interrogated as to the object of his visit, he unhesitatingly said that he not only came here to see his family, but also came in the capacity of a spy. A deserter, named Titus was shot at Canajoharie about the time the spies were hung, as I have been informed by an eye witness to all three executions.—*James Williamson.*

Deserters were shot for the first, second, or third offence, as circumstances warranted. Newbury and Titus were buried near the place of execution, and the bones of one of them were thrown out at the time of constructing the Erie Canal, by workmen who were getting earth for its embankment.† The body of Hare was given to his relatives for interment. Previous to burial the coffin was placed in a cellar-kitchen, before a window, in which position a snake crawled over it. This circumstance gave rise to much speculation among the superstitious, who said "*it was the Devil after his spirit.*"

The troops under Gen. Clinton opened a road from Canajoharie through the town of Springfield, to the head of Otsego lake, where they launched their fleet of bateaus and floated down its placid waters nine miles to its outlet—now the location of the romantic and tastefully built village of Cooperstown. This passage down the lake was made on a lovely summer's day, and the surrounding hills being covered with living green, every dash of the oar throwing up the clear, sparkling water, a thousand delighted warblers greeting them from the shores as the response of the martial music from the boats—the whole being so entirely novel—the effect must have been truly enchanting and picturesque. On arriving at the foot of the lake, the troops landed and remained several weeks, until it was sufficiently raised by a dam constructed at the outlet, to float the boats. When a sufficient head of water

**John S. Quackenboss and Mrs. E. Gardiner.*

†*Daniel Spencer, a worthy pensioner, now living at Canajoharie.*

was thus obtained—the boats having been properly arranged along the outlet and filled with the troops, stores and cannon—the dam was torn away, and the *numerous fleet of small fry*, (two hundred and eight boats) floated off in fine style, and passed down the tributary into the winding Susquehanna. (This is an aboriginal word, said to signify, *the crooked river*.) It is said that preparatory to opening the outlet of the lake, a dam made by the sagacious beavers on one of the larger inlets, which flooded considerable ground, was ordered to be destroyed to obtain the water. It was partially so served, but the night following it was, by the industrious animals, again repaired. A more effectual destruction followed, and a guard of men was stationed all night, to prevent its being again built by its lawful owners.

While the army were quartered at the outlet of Otsego lake, two men were tried for desertion, and both were sentenced to be shot. The youngest of the two, whose name was Snyder, was pardoned by Gen. Clinton. The other man was a *foreigner*, who had previously deserted from the British, and having now deserted from the American flag, and persuaded Snyder to desert, Clinton said of him—“He is good for neither king or country, let him be shot.” The order was executed on the west side of the outlet, not far distant from the lake. Not a house had then been erected where Cooperstown now stands.—*Williamson*.

The company to which Williamson belonged, was attached in Sullivan's campaign to the second New York regiment, commanded by Col. Rigne, a French officer. He was a large, well made, jovial fellow, of whom Mr. Williamson related the following anecdote. Among the men who aided in our glorious struggle for independence, was a regiment of blacks, who generally proved to be good, faithful soldiers. That they might readily be distinguished, they wore wool hats with the brim and lower half of the crown colored black—the remainder being left drab or the native color. While waiting for Otsego lake to rise, the troops were drilled every day. As Col. Rigne was thus engaged with his own and parts of several other regiments, among whom were one or two companies of black soldiers, one of the latter men, from

inattention, failed to execute a command in proper time. "Hal-loo!" said the colonel, "you plack son of a b—h wid a wite face!—why you no mind you beezness?" This hasty exclamation in broken English so pleased the troops, that a general burst of laughter followed. Seeing the men mirthful at his expense, he good humoredly gave the command to order arms. "Now," said he, "*laugh your pelly full all!*" and joining in it himself, hill and dale sent back their boisterous merriment.

In the summer of 1779, Col. Wm. Butler received timely orders to move from Schoharie and join the forces under General Clinton at Canajoharie. Among Col. Butler's men, who had rendered good services in Schoharie during their sojourn, were Lieut. Thomas Boyd,* Timothy Murphy and David Elerson. Murphy was a native of Pennsylvania, of Irish parentage, and Elerson a Virginian, of Scotch descent.

While Col. Butler was in Springfield, in the month of June, assisting to open a wagon road for the transportation of the boats, David Elerson obtained permission of his captain to proceed about

* Lieut. Boyd was a native of Northumberland county, Pennsylvania. He was about the usual height, and was a stout built, fine looking young man; being very sociable and agreeable in his manners, which had gained him many friends in Schoharie. While there, he paid his addresses to Miss Cornelia, a daughter of Bartholomew Becker, who gave birth to a daughter after his death, of which he was the reputed father. This child, named Catharine, grew up a very respectable woman, and afterwards became the wife of Martinus Vrooman. While the troops under Col. Butler were preparing to leave Schoharie, Miss Becker, in a state of mind bordering on phrensy, approached her lover, caught hold of his arm, and in tears besought him by the most earnest entreaties, to marry her before he left Schoharie. He endeavored to put her off with future promises, and to free himself from her grasp. She told him "if he went off without marrying her, *she hoped he would be cut to pieces by the Indians!*" In the midst of this unpleasant scene, Col. Butler rode up and reprimanded Boyd for his delay, as the troops were ready to march—and the latter, mortified at being seen by his commander, thus importuned by a girl, *drew his sword and threatened to stab her if she did not instantly leave him.* She did leave him, and anticipating future shame, called down the vengeance of heaven upon him. Her imprecation was answered, as will hereafter be seen, to the fullest extent: a fearful warning to those who trifle with woman's affection. Such was the last interview of Lieut. Boyd with the girl he had engaged to marry.—*Josias E. Vrooman*, who witnessed the parting scene.

a mile from the camp to a deserted house, and gather some mustard for greens. While thus engaged early in the day, he heard a rustling in some rank weeds near, and on looking in that direction, discovered to his surprise, nearly a dozen Indians cautiously advancing to capture him. He sprang and seized his rifle, which stood against the house, at which instant several tomahawks were hurled at him, one of them nearly severing a finger from his left hand. He dropped his haversack of greens and fled. In starting from the house, his foes ran so as to cut off his flight to his friends. He had to pass over a small clearing between the house and the woods, and on arriving at the farther edge of the former, he found his progress obstructed by fallen trees. He plunged in among them, when his pursuers, fearing he might escape, discharged their rifles at him. The volley rattled the old timber harmlessly about his head. Driven from the direction of the American camp, he fled, not knowing whither. After running for several hours, and when he began to think he had eluded the vigilance of his pursuers, an Indian appeared before him. As he raised his rifle the savage sprang behind a tree. At that instant, a ball fired from an opposite direction entered his body just above the hip—making a bad flesh wound. He then changed his direction, and renewed his flight. Descending a steep hill into a valley, through which coursed a small stream of water, he reached the level ground much exhausted; but the moment his feet struck the cool water his strength revived, and scooping some up in his hand, which he drank, so invigorated him, that he gained the summit of the opposite hill with comparative ease. He had proceeded but a little way further, however, when he found himself again growing faint; and stepped behind a fallen tree just as an Indian appeared in pursuit. Not doubting but his hours were numbered, he resolved not to die unrevenged, and instantly raised his rifle to shoot him. Too weak and excited to hold his gun, he sat down upon the ground, rested it upon his knees, fired, and the Indian fell. He had barely time to reload his faithful piece, before several other foes came in sight. His first thought was to bring down another, but as they gathered around their fallen

chief, and began their death yell, the hope of escape again revived. While they were lingering around their comrade, Elerson darted off into the forest. He followed the windings of a creek for some distance, and finding in a thicket of hemlocks a large hollow tree, crawled into it, and heard no more of the Indians. It was near night, and being greatly exhausted, he soon fell into a sound sleep. On the following morning he backed out, found it rained, was lost, and again entered his gloomy shelter. As it continued to rain, he tarried in the log three nights and two days, without food or having his wounds dressed. He then crept from his concealment, cold, stiff and hungry, unable at first to stand upright. He was enabled, by the sun's welcome rays to direct his course, and came out at a place in Cobelskill, known in former days as Brown's Mills, distant about three miles from where he had been concealed, and at least 25 from the place where he had first been surprised. Capt. Christian Brown, the owner of the mills, was acquainted with Elerson, treated him kindly, and sent him to the Middle Fort, ten miles distant, where his wounds were properly dressed, and he recovered. The writer saw, at his interview with this old soldier in 1837, when he obtained these facts, the scars from the wounds above noticed, and also other similar *marks of honor*.

Captain Brown, (a brother of Judge Brown,) is the officer mentioned as having been engaged under Captain Patrick the summer before, in the Cobelskill battle. His mills—a grist-mill and saw-mill, were among the first erected in that part of Schoharie county, and were not burned during the war, because a tory named Sommer, who owned lands not far distant, expected if Brown's place was confiscated to the British government, to obtain it. To gratify him the buildings were spared. Brown's *house*, a small one story dwelling, now covered with moss, is still standing. At the time the lower part of Cobelskill was burnt, a party of Indians plundered it. Captain Brown, learning that the enemy were in his vicinity, hurried his family into the woods, and then returned to secure some of his effects. While thus engaged, he saw from a window a party of Indians approaching,

and as he could not leave the house so as to avoid being seen by them, he secreted himself in some part of it. The enemy entered and supposing it entirely deserted, plundered and left it, after which Capt. Brown sought his family, and with them fled to a place of greater safety.—*James Becker.* At the house of Capt. Brown, (said *George Warner,*) during the absence of the former, and in the time of the Revolution, a wedding was consummated. The groom and bride were Brown's hired man and servant girl. The Cobelskill soldiers were invited guests, and of course attended—for *who does not attend a wedding when they can?* After the lovers were united, the party as abundantly served with good *pork and sour-crust*; and being the best the bride could provide, they were received with as much gratification as would have been the rich dainties of a modern festival of the same character. The parties were poor, and the friends knew it, and made themselves merry. The wedding was in truth a good one, for certainly "*All's well that ends well.*"

Brown's mills were situated on a road now leading from Barnerville to the village of Cobelskill, about two miles from the latter place. They were erected on a stream of water a few rods from a deep pool, whence it issued. It was unknown for many years where the water came from, until a saw-mill was erected at Abraham Kneiskern's in Carlisle, on a stream of water, which, near the mill, sank into the earth and disappeared. After this mill began to operate, saw-dust made its appearance in the pool near Brown's mills, three miles distant. This mill-stream runs into the Cobelskill at Barnerville. Several mill-streams in Carlisle and Sharon, sink into the earth, and re-appear at considerable distances from the place of entrance.

While Gen. Sullivan, with his army, was at Tioga Point, he was much annoyed by small parties of Indians, who crept up in the long grass on the opposite side of the river, and fired upon his men, killing or wounding them in repeated instances; and he devised a plan to intercept them: the execution of which was committed to Lieut. Moses Van Campen. The following is Van

Campan's own account of his manner of proceeding, as published in a small volume entitled, *Sullivan's Campaign*.

“MAJOR ADAM HOOPS—

“An aid-de-camp to Gen. Sullivan, presented to me my instructions, with a sheet of white paper folded up, a leaden weight within, and a twine-cord about twenty feet long fastened to it. I was to get as near the enemy's camp as was prudent, and to select one of the shady oaks, conceal my men in the bush, and place my sentinel in the top of the oak, with the paper and twine-cord—to give the signal if he discovered a party of Indians—to sink the paper down the tree as many feet as they were in numbers—if passing to the right or left to give the signal accordingly.

“It was one of the warm days in the latter part of August, I marched as near to the enemy's camp as I was directed. I selected my tree—my sentinel ascended twenty or twenty-five feet, and my men were concealed. We laid in watch about an hour. Every eye was fixed on the sentinel. At length the paper dropped down about four feet. I spoke to my men, saying, ‘My good fellows, we shall soon have sport.’ The paper continued to drop to ten feet. I observed again, ‘We shall have something more to do.’ The paper continued to drop to fifteen feet. ‘Now, my good fellows, we shall have enough to do—fifteen to twenty of us. Let every shot make their number less.’ Behold! the fellow had fallen asleep—let the twine-cord slip through his fingers—lost his balance—and came down like a shot head foremost. He was much bruised by the fall. I make my report to the general, &c., &c.

Gen. Clinton joined Gen. Sullivan at Tioga, August 22d, and four days after, the army, then five thousand strong, moved forward. All the Indian huts discovered on the route from Tioga westward, with the fields of growing corn, beans, &c., were destroyed by the American troops. At Newtown, now Elmira, the enemy under Cols. Butler and Johnson, and the chieftain Brant, collected a force, threw up a breastwork, and prepared to dispute the further progress of the invaders of their soil. On the 29th of August the troops under Sullivan reached the fortifications of the enemy, and a spirited action followed. The enemy evinced great bravery, but being overpowered by numbers, they abandoned their works with considerable loss.

Gen. Sullivan had a morning and evening gun fired daily while proceeding to and from the Indian country, for which he has been much censured by some chroniclers. His object in doing it was,

to notify the numerous scouting parties which were daily kept out, of his position.

Several pleasing incidents owed their origin to the signal guns. In one instance a large party of Indians were in ambush to surprise an advanced guard when the signal gun was fired from elevated ground not far distant. The Indians—who ever dread the sound of cannon, supposing the gun fired at them, scampered off like frightened sheep. Upon the firing of a signal gun after the battle of Newtown, a white woman came into the American camp. Knowing Col. John Butler, whom she supposed could give her some account of her red husband, she enquired for Col. Butler, and was immediately introduced to Col. William Butler. On coming into his presence and finding him a stranger—the truth flashed upon her mind—she was in the American camp, and in the presence of those who would protect her. She stated that she was a native of Danbury, Connecticut; had been married several years, and was living at Wyoming the year before, when that delightful country was devastated by the enemy—at which time she was made a prisoner. Her husband had been killed among the numerous victims of savage cruelty. She further stated that at the time she was captured she had three children—two small boys and an infant child at the breast. The boys were given to different Indians, and the brains of the infant were dashed out against a tree; after which she was compelled to live with an Indian as his wife. When she thus providentially entered the American camp, she had an infant child—the fruit of her late unhappy connection. This child died not long after, and it was suspected that an American soldier, from sympathy to the woman, had given it poison. As the Indian country had been invaded, this woman had been obliged to follow the fortunes of her master, and having been separated from him by the discomfiture of the enemy, Sullivan's cannon, which she supposed fired in the British camp, directed her course. On the return of the army, she went back to her friends in Connecticut.—*James Williamson.*

After the battle of Newtown, Gen. Sullivan sent back to Tioga much of his heavy baggage, and pushed forward in pursuit of the

enemy—fully executing in the destruction of the settlements the orders of the Commander-in-chief. The country of the Cayugas and Senecas, where the Indians had many flourishing settlements and several well built villages of good painted frame-houses, were entirely destroyed—together with the fields of growing corn and beans. Fruit trees, of which the Indians had an abundance, laden with green apples, peaches, and pears, were cut down. Ears of corn were found in that country full *eighteen inches long*, showing the exceeding fertility of the soil. It seems indeed lamentable that stern necessity should require the destruction of *fruit trees*, the growth of many years—but when we consider that they afforded the enemy an important item of his annual food, we must admit that the measure as one of *retaliation*, was justifiable.

At the Indian village of *Kanadaseago*, situated a little distance west of Geneva, a white male child was found by the American army. It was not more than three or four years old, and when discovered, was naked, with a string of beads about its neck. This child, which had been abandoned by the enemy in their precipitate flight, was supposed to have been among the captives made the year before, on the frontiers of New York or Pennsylvania. He was found before the door of a hut playing with small sticks, and when accosted could only say, *sago—how do*, and a few other Indian words; having been captured too young to give the least clue to his paternity.—*James Williamson.*

In addition to the above, I learn from the son of Capt. Machin, respecting this probable orphan child, that it found in that officer, (an *engineer* in the army,) a god-father, and was christened *Thomas Machin*—that it was nearly famished when found, and could not have been kept alive, had not the Americans providentially taken a fresh-milk cow which had strayed from the enemy—that the milk of this cow, which was driven with the army on the return march for that purpose, afforded its nourishment—that the *little unknown* was taken in the fall to the house of Maj. Logan at New Windsor, where it took the small-pox in the hard winter following and died, without any information ever being disclosed as to its birth-place or parentage.

PARK

Major Paar commanded the rifle corps which accompanied Sullivan in his expedition. When the army, which had met with little opposition from the enemy after the battle of Newtown, arrived at the inlet of Conesus Lake, a scout was sent out early in the evening, under Lieut. Thomas Boyd,* one of which was Timothy Murphy. Says Major Hoops, in a letter I find in *Sullivan's Campaign*—

“I was in the General's tent when he gave his instructions to Lieut. Boyd, which were very particular—verbal, of course. The country before us was unknown. We had heard of an Indian *Castle* on the river Genesee, which, by our reckoning, might be a few miles ahead of us. The term *Castle* was taken from Chateau—the French having long before magnified Indian villages into Chateaux, afterwards rendered literally into English. There were the Oneida Castle, perhaps at or near to Utica,—the Seneca Castle, near to the present village of Geneva, as well as some others. The *Castle* Lieut. Boyd was detached to discover, consisted, probably, of a few Indian huts, near Williamsburgh, a few miles above the present village of Genesee.

“The evening before Lieut. Boyd was detached by Gen. Sullivan from the inlet of the Kanaghasas Lake, a log bridge was begun and finished in the night, or early in the next morning, over the inlet. Boyd, not having returned by daylight, the General was very uneasy; particularly from finding that, to the *six riflemen* he meant Boyd's party should consist of, *twenty-two marksmen* had been added.”

The bridge alluded to was constructed by a strong covering party, sent in advance of the main army to open a road through a marshy piece of ground, and erect the bridge. The object of the scout was, to reconnoitre the ground near the Genesee river, at a place now called Williamsburgh, at a distance from the camp of nearly *seven miles*. The party were guided by Haa Yerry—John George—a faithful Oneida warrior.

In a skirmish which took place the afternoon previous to the surprise and massacre of Boyd's command, between Sullivan's advance guard and the enemy, the latter captured two friendly Oneidas, who had, from the beginning of the war, rendered the Americans constant service, and one of whom was then acting as

*Some published account has erroneously stated the given name of this man to have been William.

Gen. Sullivan's principal guide. This Indian had an older brother engaged with the enemy, who, as they met, is said (in *Stone's Brant*) to have addressed him as follows :

"Brother! You have merited death. The hatchet or the war-club shall finish your career. When I begged of you to follow me in the fortunes of war, you were deaf to my entreaties.

"Brother! You have merited death, and shall have your deserts. When the rebels raised their hatchets to fight against their good master, you sharpened your knife, you brightened your rifle, and led on our foes to the fields of our fathers.

"Brother! You have merited death, and shall die by our hands. When those rebels had driven us from the fields of our fathers to seek out new houses, it was you who could dare to step forth as their pilot, and conduct them even to the doors of our wigwams, to butcher our children and put us to death. No crime can be greater. But though you have merited death, and shall die on this spot, *my* hands shall not be stained with the blood of a brother. *Who will strike?*"

In an instant the tomahawk of *Little Beard* was twirled with lightning rapidity over his head, and in another the brave Oneida, the friend of America and of humanity, lay dead at the feet of the infuriated chief.

When we contrast the conduct of this Indian, who declared that his hands should not be stained with the blood of a brother; with that of the fratricide, who sought out his brother among the fleeing inhabitants of Wyoming, and shot him while in the act of begging for his life; with that of William Newbury, at the massacre of Cherry-Valley, who, finding a little girl by the name of Mitchell among the fallen, in whom the spark of life was reviving, with the blow of his hatchet, in the presence of her concealed father, laid her dead at his feet; with that of a tory named Beacraft, who was with the desolators of Vrooman's Land; and other instances of no less savage spirit—we shall find that of the unlettered Indian to rise in the scale of our just estimation, as that of his more savage allies, sinks them to abhorrence and contempt.

One mile and a half from Sullivan's camp, the Indian path divided, one branch leading to Canasaraga, in the direction of Williamsburg, and the other to Beard's Town. Boyd advanced cautiously and took the Canasaraga path. On arriving at the latter

place, he found it deserted, although the fires of the enemy were still burning. As the night was far advanced, he encamped near the village, intending to seek out on the morrow, the location of the enemy. This was a most hazardous enterprise. Twenty-eight men, *seven miles* from their camp—a dense forest intervening—and a thousand foes besetting their path to cut off their retreat. But *danger* was what the party courted. Before day break, Boyd dispatched two of his men to Sullivan's camp—intending to push forward still farther into the wilderness—but as they never reached it, it is quite probable they were intercepted by the enemy and slain.—*S. Treat's Oration, in Sullivan's Campaign.* Before they were put to death, the enemy no doubt learned from them the exact situation of Boyd's command. Just after daylight, Lieut. B., accompanied by Murphy cautiously crept from his place of concealment. Near the village of Canasaraga, they discovered two Indians coming out of a hut, fired at them, and a ball from Murphy's rifle sealed the fate of one. The other instantly fled. Murphy, as was his usual custom when he killed an Indian, took off his scalp, and as he had on a good pair of moccasins, he transferred them to his own feet. After the escape of the Indian fired upon by Boyd, he rightly supposed his visit would soon be made known, and he resolved to return immediately to the American camp. Boyd was advised by Han-Yerry to pursue a different route back, which commendable advice he did not choose to follow.—*James Williamson.*

About the time Murphy shot the Indian in the morning, an incident of interest occurred near the main army, which is thus related by *Maj. Hoops.*

“Early in the morning, Mr. Lodge, the surveyor, proceeded to chain from the west side of the inlet, where there was a picquet posted, and ascended a little way from the foot of the hill, *outside* the sentinels, in advance from the picquet, and was noting his work, when he was fired on by a single Indian who had crept up near him. Leaving his Jacob-staff standing, he made the best of his way toward a sentinel—the Indian almost at his heels, tomahawk in hand. It is probable the Indian had not seen the sentinel till he raised his piece and (when Mr. Lodge had passed him) fired, bringing him down, perhaps not mortally wounded. The

whole picquet immediately advanced, strongly supported ; and ascending the hill, found a line of packs."

Lieut. Boyd and his followers pursued their back track with the most zealous caution, with Han-Yerry in front and Murphy in the rear, to guard against surprise. It is not improbable that the two messengers sent forward by Boyd a few hours before, had fallen into the hands of the enemy contiguous to the American camp, and that they had left their packs to intercept the returning scout, which were found soon after Mr. Lodge was fired upon. Not the rustling of a leaf or spear of grass escaped the observation of the returning scout. Nearly two-thirds of the distance was overcome—less than two miles intervened between them and the camp—and the party were beginning to breathe freely, when they were surprised by 500 Indians under Brant, and 500 Royalists under Butler. The enemy were secreted in a ravine through which they rightly conjectured Boyd would approach.—*Statement of John Salmon, in Sullivan's Campaign.* What could 28 men do, when opposed by 1000, or nearly *forty to one.* Discovering the enemy to be concealed in great numbers, Boyd resolved on attempting his escape by cutting through his thickly opposing ranks. In the first onset, not one of his men fell, although their fire told fearfully upon the enemy. A second and third attempt was made, and *seventeen* of the Americans had fallen.—*Salmon.* At the third onset of the brave scout, the ranks of the enemy were broken, and Murphy, tumbling a huge warrior in the dust who obstructed his passage—even to the merriment of his dusky companions—led his thus liberated comrades.—*Treat's Oration.* Boyd, supposing if any one escaped with life it would be Murphy, determined to follow him, but not being as fast a runner, he was soon taken, and with him one of his men named Parker. Murphy, as he found the path unobstructed, exclaimed of himself, in hearing of the enemy, "*Clean Tim. by G—d!*" shaking his fist at the same time at his pursuers.—*Treat's Oration.* After Murphy had been pursued for some time, he observed that he had distanced all his blood-thirsty followers except two, a tall and a short Indian. Several times as they neared him, Murphy would

raise his rifle, which was unloaded, and they would fall back. He found as he ran, that his mocasons began to prove too tight, owing to the swelling of his feet.* He opened a pocket knife, and while running (at the hazard of cutting his shins) he slit the tops of his mocasons, which afforded relief. Shortly after, he entered a piece of swale, and his feet becoming entangled in long grass and rank weeds, he fell. The place proved a favorable one for concealment, and he did not immediately rise. As his pursuers broke over a knoll so as to gain a view of the grass plot, not discovering him, although he did them, they altered their course. Murphy then loaded his rifle, and cautiously proceeded on his way to the camp. He knew from the beginning of the *melee*, should he be taken prisoner, what his fate would be, having the scalp of an Indian in his pocket, and his mocasons on his feet. Shortly after Murphy again set forward, he discovered himself to be headed by an Indian in the woods: which discovery was mutual and both took trees. After dogging each other for some time, Murphy drew his ramrod, placed his hat upon it and gently moved it aside the tree; when the Indian, supposing it contained a head, fired a ball through it. The hat was thereupon dropped, and running up to scalp his man, the Indian received the bullet of Murphy's rifle through his breast; exclaiming, as he fell backwards, "O-wah!"

Murphy, Garret Putman of Fort Hunter (afterwards a captain,) and a French Canadian, were all of Lieut. Boyd's command who regained the American camp. The two latter secreted themselves early in their flight under a fallen tree, around which was growing a quantity of thrifty nettles, and escaped observation; although several Indians passed over the log in pursuit of Murphy. John Putman, a cousin of Garret, also from the vicinity of Fort Hunter, was killed in Groveland. At his burial it was supposed he had been shot in the act of firing, as a ball and

* It has been stated, and is now believed by many, that Murphy skinned the feet of this Indian and put the green hides on. It was not so; and had he been disposed to have done it, which I cannot possibly admit, he could not have had time on that morning.

several buck-shot had entered the right arm-pit, without injuring the arm.—*Peter, a brother of John Putman, corroborated by James Williamson.*

A soldier named Benjamin Custom, who joined Gen. Sullivan with the troops from Schoharie, attempted to follow Murphy, but was overtaken and slain in Groveland.—*Geo. Richtmyer.* When Murphy reached the camp, and told the sad fate of his companions, Gen. Sullivan declared *it was good enough for them, as they had disobeyed his orders*; possibly in advancing farther than he intended they should.—*J. Williamson.*

When Boyd found himself a prisoner, he obtained an interview with Brant, who was a freemason. After the magic signs of a brotherhood were exchanged, the dusky warrior assured the captain he should not be injured. Soon after their capture, Boyd and Parker were hurried off to the vicinity of *Beard's Town*, now in the town of Leicester, ten or fifteen miles distant from the battle-field. Brant was called off on some enterprise not long after, and the prisoners were kept in charge of one of the Butlers, probably Walter, the destroyer of Cherry-Valley; who began to interrogate them about the future instructions of Gen. Sullivan, threatening them, if true and ready answers were not given, with savage tortures. Boyd, believing the assurance of Brant ample for his safety, too high minded to betray his country on the appearance of danger, refused, as did Parker, to answer Butler's questions; and the latter, executing his threat, gave them over to a party of Seneca Indians. Little Beard and his warriors, seized the helpless victims, and having stripped, bound them to trees. They then practised their favorite pastime for such occasions, of throwing their hatchets into the tree just over the heads of their victims. Becoming wearied of this amusement, a single blow severed Parker's head from his body. The attention of the tormentors being undivided, they began to tax their ingenuity for tortures to inflict on his surviving comrade. Making an incision into the abdomen, they fastened his intestines to a tree, and compelled him to move round it, until they were thus all drawn out. He was again pinioned to a tree, his mouth enlarged—his

nails dug out—his tongue cut out—his ears cut off—his nose cut off and thrust into his mouth—his eyes dug out, and when sinking in death, he was also decapitated, and his disfigured head raised upon a sharpened pole. To those Indian cruelties we must suppose Butler was not only a witness, but that they were rendered the more inhuman, in the hope of gratifying his revengeful disposition. Thus fell the brave Lieutenant Thomas Boyd, at the age of twenty-two years.

On the arrival of Murphy, Gen. Sullivan ordered Gen. Hand forward to relieve Boyd and party. At the spot where the engagement had taken place, he discovered several Indian blankets, and an Indian's corpse, which had been accidentally left among the fallen Americans; but returned to the main army, ignorant of the fate of Boyd.—*Oration of Treat.*

Poor Han-Yerry, who had performed prodigies of valor in the conflict of Oriskany, and who had rendered the American cause much real service, fell literally hacked in pieces. The army, as it moved on towards the Genesee river, buried the bodies of those who fell in the present town of Groveland. On the following day, Generals Clinton and Hand, with about two thousand troops, were sent across the Genesee river to Beard's Town, to destroy the dwellings, crops, &c. of the Senecas.—*Treat's Oration and Letter of Van Campen.*

Mr. Sanborn, a soldier who was on the extreme right wing of Clinton's army, discovered the headless bodies of Boyd and Parker. The rifle company of Captain Simpson, of which Boyd had been lieutenant, performed the melancholy duty of burying the mutilated remains of their comrades, which was done *under a wild plum tree, and near a stream of water.*—*James Williamson.*

Beard's Town, one of the largest Indian villages in the Genesee valley, was effectually destroyed, as were several other Indian towns on the west side of the Genesee, by the troops under Gen. Clinton, together with every growing substance found, that the enemy would eat. While this destruction was in progress, officers Poor and Maxwell proceeded along the east side of the river and destroyed the villages of *Canawagus* and *Big Tree*. Three

days being thus occupied in this vicinity, in the work of devastation, Sullivan commenced his return march to Tioga Point. As the American troops approached the western Indian villages, the women and children fled from them to Niagara, while the Indians and their tory allies prowled about the forest, watching the movements of their foes, and seeking a favorable opportunity to strike an effective blow. During the winter following, the Indians became a tax upon the British government, and as the weather was intensely cold, and they were fed on salt provisions, to which they were unaccustomed, they died in fearful numbers by the scurvy.—
Treat's Oration.

It is gratifying to know, that justice has now been done to the memory of Boyd and his companions. In the autumn of 1841, *sixty-two years* after their massacre, their remains were taken up, through the commendable zeal of the citizens of Rochester, removed to that city and deposited at Mount-Hope cemetery. On the delivery, by the citizens of Livingston county, of the bones of Boyd and Parker, which were found near the junction of two creeks, hereafter to be known as *Boyd's creek* and *Parker's creek*, and those of that unfortunate lieutenant's command who fell in Groveland, to the receiving committee of Monroe county, an appropriate oration was delivered at Geneseo, by S. Treat, Esq. of that place, to an audience, estimated at *five thousand persons*. When the procession arrived at Mount-Hope, near Rochester, and had deposited the sarcophagus and urn in their final resting place, a patriotic address was delivered by his Excellency William H. Seward. Several old soldiers took part in the ceremonies, among whom were Maj. Moses Van Campen, who had, in early life, been a near neighbor of Boyd, and Mr. Sanborn, who discovered the remains of Boyd and Parker the day after they were killed. The proceedings were highly creditable to the enterprise and patriotism of Monroe and Livingston counties, and will forever be hailed as a bright page in the history of Western New York. The place of their burial at Mount-Hope, is set apart not only to receive the remains of those brave men, but of any other soldiers of the revolution that may desire a burial there.

To a State Convention, called to devise measures "*for appreciating the currency, restraining extortion, regulating prices, and other similar purposes,*" Frederick Fisher, John Frey, Christopher W. Fox, Crowneage Kincade, John Petrie, and Werner Deygert were elected by the people of the Mohawk valley, as certified to by Jacob G. Klock, chairman of Tryon county committee. Dated, Committee Chamber, August 16, 1779.

In October of this year, the enemy, about two hundred strong, under Major Monroe, consisting of British regulars, tories, and Indians, entered the Ballston settlement. Most of the early settlers of Saratoga county were from New England, and were good li-vers. An invasion had been anticipated, and two hundred Schenectada militia were sent to aid in protecting the settlement. A church, called afterwards the *red meeting-house*, was being erected at the time, and opposite and near it, a dwelling owned by a Mr. Weed was inclosed in pickets, at which place the Schenectada troops were stationed. About the same time, the Ballston militia, thinking the troops sent to aid them were not sufficiently courageous, erected a small defence on Pearson's Hill, afterwards called Court House Hill, nearly two miles in advance of the stockade named, and where the invaders were expected to enter. The little fortress on the hill was guarded for several nights, but as the enemy did not appear, it was abandoned.

The second night (Sunday night) after the Ballston troops dispersed, the enemy broke into the settlement. They made their first appearance at Gordon's Mills, situated on a stream called the Morning kill, entering the public road at the foot of the hill noticed. Col. James Gordon, who commanded the Ballston militia, and Capt. Collins, an active partizan officer, living near him, were both surprised at their dwellings, and borne into captivity, with nearly thirty of their neighbors. On the arrival of the enemy at the house of Capt. Collins, Mann Collins, his son, escaped from it, and gave the alarm to John and Stephen Ball, his brothers-in-law. The latter mounted a horse, and rode to the house of Maj. Andrew Mitchell, (Major under Col. Gordon,) who, with his family, fled into the fields, and escaped. The Balls also communi-

cated intelligence of the enemy's proximity to the Schenectada troops at the Fort.

At Gordon's Mills, one Stowe, his miller, was captured on the arrival of Monroe's party, and, for some reason, soon after liberated. Feeling himself obligated to Col. Gordon, he thought it his duty to inform him of his danger, and afford him a chance of escape. Crossing a field with that laudable intent, he met an Indian, who, seeing a fugitive, as he supposed, attempting to escape, thrust a spontoon through his body, and instantly killed him.

Great numbers of cattle and hogs were driven away at this time, or killed, several dwellings and out-buildings burned, and the whole settlement greatly alarmed by the invaders, who proceeded directly back to Canada by the eastern route. Among the dwellings burned were those of one Waters, one Pearson, several Spragues, and several Patchins. Two dwellings, a little north of the present residence of Judge Thompson, owned at the time by Kennedys, escaped the torch, as they had a friend among the invaders.

The troops assembled in the neighborhood were on their trail by daylight on Monday morning, and followed some distance; but meeting a liberated captive, who bore a message from Col. Gordon advising the Americans to abandon the pursuit, it was given over. Why the message was sent, I am not informed, but presume he either thought the enemy too strong to warrant it, or the prisoners in danger of assassination if a hasty retreat was necessary. Col. Gordon was an Irishman by birth, and a firm patriot. He was confined in a Canadian prison for several years, and was one of a party of six or eight prisoners, who effected their escape in the latter part of the war, and after much suffering succeeded in reaching home. Henry and Christian Banta, Epenetus White, an ensign of militia, and several others, neighbors of Col. G., and captured subsequently, also escaped with him. Procuring a boat, the fugitives crossed the St. Lawrence, and from its southern shore directed their steps through the forest, coming out at Passamaquoddy Bay, in Maine, where they found friends. Before reaching a dwelling the party were all in a starving condition, and Col.

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Gordon gave out, and was left, at his request, by his friends, who proceeded to a settlement, obtained assistance, returned, and bore him in a state of entire helplessness to a place of safety, where he recovered.

While the party were journeying, they agreed that if either of them obtained any thing to eat, he should be permitted to enjoy or distribute it as he chose. In the forest, to which the trapper had not been a stranger, one of the number found a steel-trap, in which an otter had been caught, and suffered to remain. It was mostly in a state of decomposition. The leg in the trap was whole, however, and a sight of that, Col. Gordon afterwards assured his friends, looked more inviting to him than the most savory dish he had ever beheld; but pinching hunger did not compel a violation of their agreement—his mouth watered in vain, and the finder ate his dainty morsel undisturbed. When the fugitives arrived at a house, and asked for bread, the woman told them *she had not seen a morsel in three years*. After crossing the St. Lawrence, two Indians accompanied them as guides, but under some pretext left, and finally abandoned them. The party, after suffering almost incredible hardships, all reached their homes in Ballston to the great joy of their friends.—*Charles and Hugh, sons of Major Mitchell.*

In the fall of 1779, several stockades in the vicinity of the Mohawk river were under the command of Col. Fr. Fisher, as appears by a journal of that officer's military correspondence, placed in the hands of the author by his son Maj. Daniel Visscher. Col. Fisher established his head quarters at Fort Paris. The following facts are gleaned from the memoranda. His first *patrol* for the several garrisons was "Washington," and *countersign* "Sullivan." Subject to his direction were the troops stationed at the Johnstown Fort, Fort Plank, and the block-houses at Sacandaga, and Reme Snyder's bush. The last named was a little distance northeast of Little Falls.

About the 10th of November, as reported to Gen. Ten Broek, then commanding at Albany, Col. Fisher mentions the burning of a dwelling in the back part of Mayfield. The owner, Harmanus Flanke, suspected of disaffection to the American cause, was then

living in Johnstown. The house was supposed to have been destroyed by some one from the block-house at Sacandaga. The roof of another house, the owner of which was of similar politics, was torn off, such was the spirit of party animosity.

In a letter to Maj. Taylor, then commanding the Johnstown Fort, dated November 27, Col. Fisher states that he is under the necessity of convening a court martial on the following day, and that he, the Major, should attend, bringing with him another officer, also to act as a member. The same letter states that an accident happened at that fort the same morning, by which two men were wounded—one mortally. The nature of the accident is perhaps explained in a letter from Col. Fisher to Gen. Ten Broek, dated the 28th instapt. In it he states, that during his absence to visit Fort Plank, a detachment of men from Col. Stephen J. Schuyler's regiment *mutinied*, and expressing a determination to leave the fort, charged their pieces with ball, in presence of the officers. They were at first persuaded to unslung their packs and remain until Col. Fisher returned, but seeing Captain Jelles Fonda, (known afterwards as Major Fonda,) then in temporary command of the garrison, writing to Col. F., the mutineers again mounted packs, and knocking down the sentinels in their way, began to desert in earnest. Capt. Fonda ordered them to stand, but not heeding his command they continued their flight, when he ordered the troops of the Fort to fire upon them: the order was obeyed, and Jacob Valentine, one of the number, fell mortally wounded, and expired the next morning. The letter does not so state, but I have been advised that the deserters considered their term of enlistment at an end. The court martial, I suppose, convened to try Capt. Fonda, as I have been credibly informed that he was thus tried for a similar offence, and *honorably acquitted*.

Early in December, as the season was so far advanced that an enemy was unlooked for, and provisions were becoming scarce, it was resolved, at a meeting of Colonels Fisher, J. Klock, and Lt. Col. B. Wagner, with the sanction of Gen. Ten Broek, to dismiss the three months militia from further service; and some of the garrisons were for a time broken up.

The early and energetic measures adopted in 1779, against the enemy, prevented the sallies of the latter upon most of the frontiers of New York, and that year was one in which the pioneers suffered comparatively but little, from the tomahawk and scalping knife.

At this period of the contest the states were beginning to gain favor in Europe. Early in 1779, the king of Naples opened his ports to the striped bunting of the United States; and in the course of the season Spain declared war against England. John Jay was appointed by Congress, of which he was then a member, a minister to the court of Spain.

Although no great enterprises were achieved to the United States during this season, if we except the destruction of the Indian possessions in western New York; still many events occurred in the length and breadth of the land, to raise and depress the hopes of the Americans. The south became the theatre of some of the most important events. An attempt was made by the American troops under Gen. Lincoln, and the French under the Count d'Estaing, to take Savannah; and notwithstanding the allied forces displayed great bravery, they were repulsed with a loss of 1000 men. Several good officers were killed in this unfortunate attack, among whom was the noble and generous Pole, Count Pulaski, then a brigadier-general.

Although several brilliant exploits were performed at the south by the American troops, still the year closed without any event transpiring to greatly accelerate the close of the contest. In the course of the season, Gen. Tryon and Gen. Garth wantonly destroyed much property along the coast of Connecticut. After sacking New Haven, they laid Fairfield and Norwalk in ashes, committing numerous outrages upon the helpless citizens. As the militia turned out promptly on those occasions, the British sought safety on shipboard. While the enemy were thus engaged in Connecticut, Gen. Wayne most gallantly stormed the fortress of Stony Point in the Highlands of the Hudson.

It was also in the autumn of this season that Com. John Paul Jones, a meritorious and distinguished naval officer in the Ameri-

can service, alarmed several towns in Scotland, and in an engagement off that coast, took the British frigate Serapis, after one of the most bloody battles ever fought upon the ocean. Both ships were repeatedly on fire, and when the enemy struck his colors, the wounded could scarcely be removed to the conquered vessel, which was also much crippled, before the Bon Homme Richard, Jones's ship, went down.

At the close of the season, part of the northern army went into winter quarters under Gen. Washington a second time at Morristown, New Jersey, and the remainder in the vicinity of West Point. Owing to the almost valueless currency of the country, which would not buy provisions, a want of proper management in the commissary department, a lack of suitable clothing, and the extreme severity of the winter, the American troops suffered incredible hardships. But this suffering was endured, for their beloved commander suffered with them, and the object for which the soldier had taken up arms, had not yet been accomplished.