

CHAPTER VII.

REVOLUTIONARY WAR.

1775.

On the 4th of January the town "voted to come into the Measures Recommended by the Continentall Congress in their association agreement—voted to choos a Committe of Inspection agreeable to s^d advice: Choose Capt Isaac Wyman Leut. Timothy Ellis Tho^s Baker Dan Guild & William Ellis for said Committe of Inspection." "Choose Capt Isaac Wyman to Represent s^d Town at the meeting at Exeter to be held on the 21st Instant for the choice of Delegates for the Continental Congress to meet at Philadelphia on may Next."

That convention of deputies from the several towns, sometimes called the Second Provincial congress, met at Exeter on the 25th of January, issued an address to the people warning them of the dangers of British aggression, encouraging them to stand firm as patriots, to support the committee of correspondence, to practise military drill, and to adhere to the agreement to sustain the measures recommended by the Continental congress. John Sullivan and John Langdon were chosen delegates to another Continental congress which was to meet at Philadelphia on the 10th of May.

Nine of the leading men of the colony were appointed a committee of safety, Mathew Thornton of Londonderry chairman, with full power to act as the executive of the colony when the congress was not in session and "to call a Provincial Convention of Deputies, when they shall judge the exigencies of publick affairs require it."

A town meeting on the 23d of February chose Capt. Isaac Wyman to "Represent the Town as a Member of the General Assembly holden at Portsmouth on Febr^y 23^d & so day by Day During their Sessions."

The annual town meeting in March refused to raise

money for the support of preaching, but voted 13^s 4^d to Elisha Briggs "for his service in finishing the meeting house," and 6^s to Silas Cooke for sweeping the same. For about six years at this time the town was without a settled minister. Sixty pounds were voted for schools, the management of the schools was added to the duties of the selectmen, and no school committees were chosen.

The controversy with Great Britain increased in bitterness, and the people in all parts of the country grew more and more excited. Civil officers threw up their commissions under the king, the courts of justice were suspended and the laws relating to civil affairs were no longer executed.

By the militia law then in force, the execution of which was now in the hands of the committee of safety and the provincial congress, every male inhabitant from sixteen to sixty years of age was required to provide himself with a musket and bayonet, knapsack, cartridge-box, one pound of powder, twenty bullets and twelve flints. Every town was required to keep constantly on hand one barrel of powder, 200 pounds of lead and 300 flints for every sixty men, besides a quantity of these stores for those who were unable to supply themselves. Even the old men and those not able to do full military duty were required to keep on hand the same supply of arms and ammunition as the active militia-men. But for fifteen years there had been peace and the law had not been enforced, and now the people were rudely awakened to the fact that there was less than half the required amount of military stores among them, and that there were scarcely any to be had in the country; that the veterans of the Indian wars were fast passing away; and that their young men were learning nothing of military arts and duties.

Attention was called to these facts by the leading patriots and by the convention. In addition to the regularly organized companies and regiments, voluntary associations were formed for the purpose of learning military exercises, the brightest and most experienced men were chosen to command, and drills and training became frequent. Companies of "minute men" were organized, to

move at a minute's warning, and the manufacture of arms, equipments and powder was stimulated. Congress urged the collection of saltpetre, and bounties were paid by the colony to those who produced the largest quantities of that article; and everybody set to work to save everything about the stables and other buildings from which it could be extracted.

The patriots had collected a few military stores at various points, particularly at Concord, Mass. Gen. Gage, the British commander at Boston, determined to seize and destroy them. But no secret whispered among the British officers and royalists in Boston failed to reach the ears of the patriots.

The committees of safety and the people were on the watch. Men were stationed in each of the towns of Charlestown, Cambridge and Roxbury with instructions to note every movement of the British troops. Expresses were kept in readiness to speed intelligence to the country around and preparations were made to flash the news by signal lights.

In the evening of Tuesday, April 18, the British grenadiers and light infantry were put in motion and marched down to the foot of the common. At 11 o'clock they crossed the river in boats, landed at Lechmere Point (East Cambridge), and started on their march to Lexington and Concord.

The patriot sentinels were alert. The lanterns were hung in the steeple of Christ church on Copp's hill. Paul Revere crossed Charles river in a boat five minutes before the British sentinels received the order to allow no one to leave Boston, mounted a fleet horse and sped away to Lexington, rousing the people as he went. Other messengers hastened in all directions, bells were rung and neighbor sent word to neighbor.

Before sunrise American citizens had been slain at Lexington, and minute-men and other patriots were flocking to the scene of action. The tidings were caught up by relays of swift horsemen and fleet runners on foot—"like the burnt and bloody cross of the Scotch Highlanders"—and carried to every township and every log cabin.

So swift were those messengers that they reached New Ipswich—60 miles away—the same afternoon, while the British were still on their bloody retreat to Boston, and ninety-seven men under Capt. Thomas Heald started for Lexington at 2 o'clock that night.

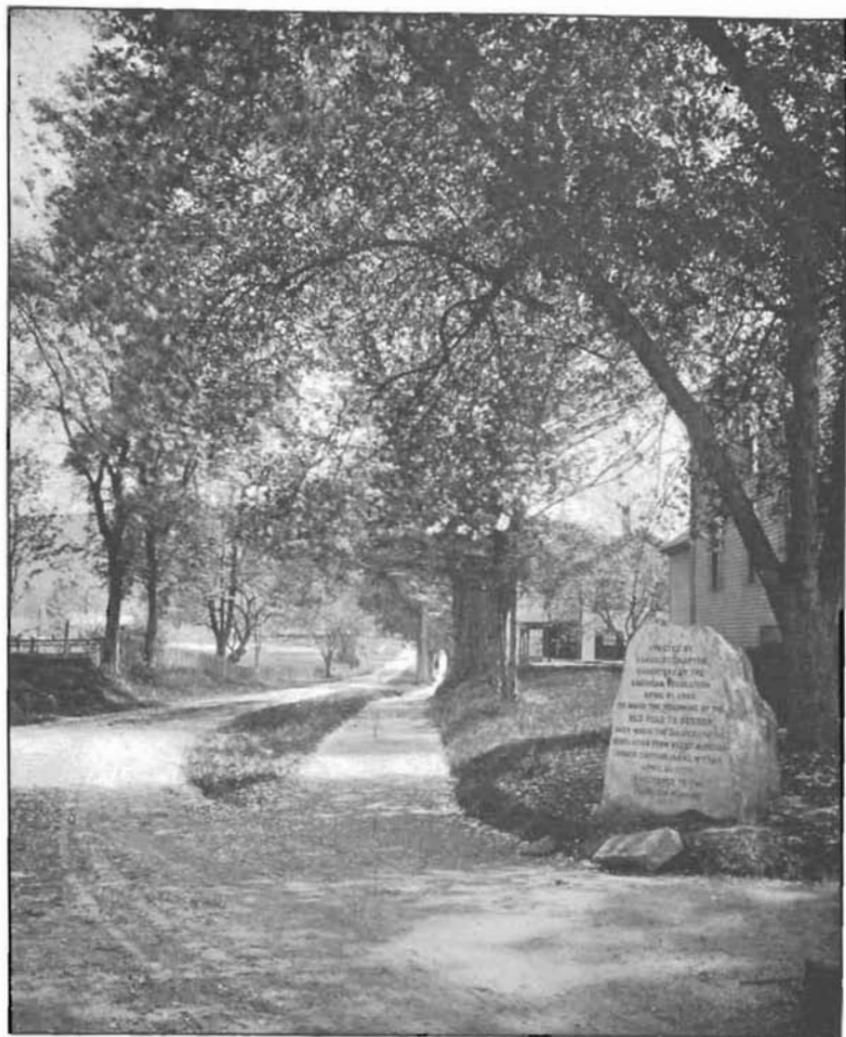
Rindge received the news late on the same afternoon, the night was spent in rallying, and fifty-four men under Captain—afterwards Colonel—Nathan Hale started early the next morning and were in Cambridge before night of the 21st.

It was ninety miles to Keene, and there was no road this side of New Ipswich—nothing but a bridle path through the woods, to be followed by marked trees—nevertheless the messenger arrived here “in the forenoon” of the 20th. Capt. Ephraim Dorman commanded the military company. He lived on the east side of Main street just north of what is now Baker street. Resolute and patriotic but too old for active service—he was then sixty-five—he immediately called for consultation on Capt. Isaac Wyman, a more experienced soldier than himself, who kept the public house already described. By his advice messengers were sent to every part of the town, notifying the inhabitants to meet on the “Green” that afternoon.

The meetinghouse stood then where the soldiers' monument stands now, facing south; and the “Green,” or common—the training ground of the military company—was the space in front of the meetinghouse extending down to the present railroad tracks, with a few detached ten-footers on its eastern side, and open fields bordered by one or two small buildings on the west.

The meeting was held as notified, and voted unanimously to send a company “to oppose the regulars.” Capt. Wyman was chosen commander, and though fifty-one years old—a veteran of the French and Indian wars—he promptly accepted the command. Volunteers were called for and twenty-nine men stepped to the front, the captain himself making the number thirty.

With the wisdom of experience, he told his men to return to their homes, prepare their arms and equipments



BOSTON ROAD, NOW BAKER STREET. WITH D. A. R. MARKER.

and get provisions for several days; for, said he, "all the roads will be full of men and you can procure nothing on the way;" and to meet at his house the next morning at sunrise.

That evening, by invitation of Capt. Wyman, Capt. Dorman, Lieut. Jeremiah Stiles and other leading patriots of the town met for consultation in the north room of Capt. Wyman's tavern—the same parlor in which the first meeting of the trustees of Dartmouth college had been held in 1770—and everything that foresight could suggest was arranged for the march.

Promptly at the hour¹—on that Friday morning, the 21st of April, 1775—the men were there and immediately marched off down Main street, turning down what is now Baker street, and out on the Marlboro road and thence to Jaffrey and New Ipswich, probably, as that was then the road to Boston. Their names were:

Capt. Isaac Wyman.

Jeremiah Stiles, chosen lieutenant and afterwards captain and commanded the company at Bunker Hill.

John Griggs, afterwards spelled Gregg, chosen ensign and was afterwards a captain.

Samuel White, appointed sergeant, twenty years old.

Ezra Metcalf, appointed sergeant, left wife and child in the west part.

Asahel Nims, appointed sergeant, son of David, 26 years old, killed at Bunker Hill.

Luke Metcalf, appointed corporal.

Benjamin Ellis, appointed corporal, son of Joseph, twenty years old, afterwards a captain in the Continental army.

Samuel Bassett, fifer, slightly wounded at Bunker Hill.

Ebenezer Billings, came to Keene from Packersfield, an apprentice of Breed Batcheller, the tory.

William Bradley.

Stephen Day, wounded at Bunker Hill and died Aug. 17.

Jesse Dassance; James Eddy; Caleb Ellis, son of Lieut. Timothy Ellis; Hugh Gray; Isaac Griswold;² Eliakim Nims, brother of Asahel, twenty-four years old.

¹"In the afternoon, Gen. Bellows, Col. John Bellows, and Thomas Sparhawk, arrived from Walpole, and riding to his house, inquired for Capt. Wyman. Being answered, that he started at sunrise, at the head of a company of men, they exclaimed, 'Keene has shown a noble spirit!' and hastened onwards. They were soon followed by a party of men from Walpole." (Annals, page 41.)

²On the roll as from Gilsuim. He lived near the line; owned land in both towns, which then gave him the right to vote in both; was prominent in the town affairs of Keene for many years; and was a member of this company.

Charles Rice,¹ Daniel Stone, Joseph Thatcher, Elisha Willis, Daniel Willson, great uncle of the late Gen. James Wilson (lived at this time in what has since been known as the Jabez Daniels house on Court street, south of the glue factory), left wife and three children.

These twenty-two men marched from Keene with Capt. Wyman, enlisted into the service, were in Stiles's company at Bunker Hill, were afterwards transferred into a Massachusetts regiment, and their identity is shown on that regimental roll by the date of enlistment, at Keene, April 21, 1775.

We also learn from the New Hampshire Revolutionary Rolls that Benjamin Tiffany, a sergeant, and Elijah Blake, a private, in the company of Capt. Samuel Richards, of Goffstown, in Stark's regiment; and Ebenezer Carpenter, a sergeant in the company of Capt. Benjamin Mann, of Mason, in Reed's regiment, were from Keene, and each enlisted April 23, and were in the battle of Bunker Hill. It is therefore probable—almost certain—that these three men were also among the thirty who marched from Keene on the 21st; and that in the unsettled state of affairs, the strife among recruiting officers to secure men, and the fact that Capt. Wyman was promoted out of the company, these men joined other companies, dating their enlistment from the time they arrived at Medford instead of the time they left Keene, as did Col. Stark, Capt. Wyman and many others.² These make twenty-six of the thirty, leaving four still to be accounted for.

The company made its march of eighty-five miles in two days, arriving at Medford on the 23d.

¹On the roll as from Surry, but a member of this company, and wounded at Bunker Hill.

Petition of Charles Rice, Bunker Hill soldier, 1791:

"To the hon'ble the Senate and house of Representatives in General Court convened at Concord.—Humbly Shews, Charles Rice of Keene, that in the year 1775 being a Soldier in Captain Jeremiah Stiles's Company & Col^o John Starks Regiment he received a most distressing wound through the breast at the memorable battle of Bunker Hill—which has ever since rendered it impossible for him to gain a comfortable subsistence for himself—much more for a numerous family which daily look to him for that assistance which he would most readily afford were it in his power.—That your petitioner has never received the least assistance from his Country being entirely ignorant of any feasible method of making application—He therefore prays your Honorable body to compassionate his case and lend him such assistance as in your clemency you shall judge proper—And as in duty bound ever prays Jeremiah Stiles in behalf of the petitioner"

(State Papers, vol. 12, page 318.)

²In Gilmore's "New Hampshire Men at Bunker Hill" Tiffany and Blake are put down as from Goffstown, but correspondence with the town clerk of that town and others in that vicinity fails to discover their names as residents of Goffstown, at that time or any other, and it is evident—their "residence" not being given—that they were put down as from that town simply because they were in the company of Capt. Richards of Goffstown.



JABEZ DANIELS HOUSE, COURT STREET. BUILT BEFORE 1775.

The same intense excitement and promptness of action were everywhere to be seen. The Swanzey company of sixty-two men, under Captain (afterwards Colonel) Joseph Hammond, started at daylight.¹ To each of the little towns away from the main lines of travel the only roads were those bridle paths, though some of them—as was the case between New Ipswich and Keene—had been regularly laid out by the towns. At Packersfield (Nelson), the tidings were received about the same time as at Keene, and the men were rallied during the afternoon and night. There were but thirty-four men in that town of suitable age to go, and twenty-seven of them marched at sunrise under Lieut. Abijah Brown. And some other towns did equally well.

This shows a condition of public sentiment in Keene which needs explanation. At that time Keene had a fully organized military company which numbered, in 1773, 127 officers and men, besides an "alarm list," or home guard, of the older men, which numbered forty-five. In 1775, those companies must have been still larger; yet Keene turned out but thirty men.

The explanation is that the colonel of the militia regiment here, one of the wealthiest, most active, and most prominent men in the county, was Josiah Willard, then living in Winchester—the same who had commanded the company here in 1748—and he was a tory. His son, Josiah Willard,¹ major of the regiment, lived here, had been Keene's first representative to the legislature in 1768-70, was at this time, and had been for several years, recorder of deeds, and had much influence in the town, and he, too, was a tory. Lieut. Benjamin Hall,² who for four years had been Keene's representative in the colonial assembly, was a tory. Elijah Williams, the bright young lawyer of the town, a graduate of Harvard college, was a tory. Dr. Josiah Pomeroy, a leading physician of the town, was a tory. Breed Batcheller, the second major of

¹ Revolutionary Rolls, vol. 1, page 36. Swanzey Town History says "at sunrise."

² Major Willard, Lieut. Hall, Samuel Wadsworth, John Swan and probably some of the others, afterwards took the side of the patriots and regained their positions as trusted and respected citizens; and John Swan volunteered and served in Col. Isaac Wyman's regiment in 1776, and Major Willard was one of those whose pay for services in the patriot cause was adjusted in 1788.

the regiment, more widely known in Keene, where he had been a citizen, than in Packersfield, where he then lived, was a tory. There were thirteen of them in the town, besides Batcheller, and nearly all were men of property and influence. They did not believe it possible for the patriots to succeed, and, as a matter of prudence and policy, they believed it their duty to stand by the royal government. But for their adverse influence there can be no doubt that the number of volunteers from Keene would have been very much larger.

Nearly every town in the province sent volunteers. Two thousand New Hampshire men were on the ground at Cambridge and Medford by the 23d, and with those from Massachusetts, Rhode Island and Connecticut, formed an unorganized army of nearly 20,000 men—without uniforms and many of them without equipments.

On the 22d, Gen. Artemas Ward of Massachusetts was appointed a major general in the service of that province, and assumed command of all the troops. Stark, the veteran Indian fighter from Derryfield (Manchester), N. H., was there on the 22d, and was ordered by Gen. Ward to take position at Chelsea with 300 men, forming the extreme left of the American line, which extended to Roxbury. Boston was now completely inclosed on the land side, the patriots began to throw up intrenchments all along their lines, and the city, with the British army therein, was in a state of siege.

As there was no staff organization from New Hampshire on the ground, and no rations, ammunition, or supplies of any kind provided by the authorities of that province, New Hampshire men were advised to enlist for the time being into the service of Massachusetts in order to draw rations and quarters. An arrangement of that kind was made by a committee of the New Hampshire provincial congress with one from that of Massachusetts—the men to be accounted for on the quota of New Hampshire—and supplies were issued to some of the New Hampshire troops by the commissaries of Massachusetts.¹

¹ Commissions were issued to Stark and Reed as colonels, April 26, by the Massachusetts committee of safety, which were accepted to continue till New Hampshire acted. (McClintock's History of New Hampshire, page 332.)

To form their own separate organization the New Hampshire officers met at Medford on the 26th and elected field officers. John Stark was chosen colonel, Isaac Wyman of Keene, lieutenant colonel, and Andrew McClary of Epsom, major of the First New Hampshire regiment. Stark, being the senior and most experienced officer on the ground, was recommended by the meeting "to take charge of all New Hampshire troops in the field." (The room in which the officers met was called "New Hampshire Hall" afterwards.) The next day, Col. Stark established his headquarters at Medford, by order of Gen. Ward. Lieut. Jeremiah Stiles succeeded to the command of the Keene company, and was afterwards commissioned captain.

Most of the men who had gathered in such haste around Boston were farmers, impatient to strike a blow for their country, or to be at home to plant their crops and attend to their affairs. Seeing no prospect of immediate action at the front, large numbers of them returned to their homes—many of them with the consent of their officers, others without asking consent. There was no power to hold them because they had not yet signed enlisting papers in any regular service; and, in some cases, they were advised by their commanders to go home and prepare for a war of indefinite length.

Four of our Keene men came home, but ten others stood ready to take their places; or, very likely the same men, or some of them, soon returned to the front. It is altogether probable that some of these later volunteers were in that first company.

The names of those who joined—or rejoined—the company at Medford in time to be present at the battle of Bunker Hill were:

Benjamin Archer, appointed sergeant May 26.
 Ebenezer Cook, appointed sergeant May 15.
 Joseph Gray, } enlisted May 15.
 William Gray, } sons of Aaron Gray of Gray's Hill.
 Samuel Hall,¹ enlisted May 15.
 Benjamin Hall (son of Samuel), enlisted May 15.

¹ Entered on this roll as from Rockingham, but reported ever afterwards as from Keene, was a citizen of Keene for many years previous and following, was in the military company here in 1778, and doubtless went from Keene at this time.

Hannaniah Hall, enlisted May 15.

David Harris, enlisted May 8.

Stephen Larabee, enlisted May 8.

Thomas Morse, enlisted May 15.

Silas French and Tilley Howe joined after the battle of Bunker Hill; and the name of Jonathan Wheeler of Keene appears on a later roll of the same company.¹

In the meantime the excitement among the people at home was intense. Upon the alarm of the 19th, the committee of safety of New Hampshire sent runners to the several towns asking them to send delegates to a convention to be held at Exeter on the 21st, to consult for the general safety. The inhabitants of Keene came together hurriedly and without legal notice, on the 27th, and "Chose Lieut. Timothy Ellis² a Delegate to meet the Committee at Exeter, and, as a member, to sit in the provincial Congress at Exeter whenever they may convene." That convention of the 21st, sometimes called the Third Provincial congress, appointed Col. Nathaniel Folsom of Exeter a brigadier general to command the New Hampshire troops around Boston, and recommended the several towns to provide their proportion of £500 worth of biscuit, flour and pork for the public use; and that they "engage as many men in each town as they may think fit to be properly equipt & ready to march at a minute's warning on any emergency." A special committee was appointed to procure arms and ammunition for the towns.

On the 4th of May the regular assembly of the province was called together at Portsmouth by proclamation of Gov. Wentworth. Capt. Isaac Wyman was the member of the house of representatives for Keene, but he was in the army and did not attend.³

¹"Soon after the battle of Lexington, several Tories, among whom was Elijah Williams Esq., left this vicinity, and joined the British, in Boston." (Annals, page 41.)

²"He expressed his willingness to accept the office, but declared that he had not, and could not, in season, procure money enough to bear his expenses. The inhabitants, thereupon, voted that he might draw from the treasury four pounds, lawful money." (Annals, page 41.)

³In his speech the governor urged upon the legislature "a Restoration of our Harmony with Great Britain." On the 6th, "in his Majesty's name he adjourned the General Assembly" to the 12th of June. A few of the members met on that day according to adjournment, but adjourned from day to day, and no business was transacted. On the 15th of July the governor sent in his last message, and ordered an adjournment till September; but the general assembly of the province under the government of Great Britain never met afterwards. Governor John Wentworth, an upright, honorable man, maintained himself in nominal power until September, when he abdicated, and sailed away in a British frigate.

Soon after the meeting of the convention at Exeter, in April, the committee of safety for the province sent formal notices to the towns to send delegates to a convention to be held at Exeter on the 17th of May. This convention was called the Fourth Provincial congress. Great enthusiasm prevailed during its session. A patriotic address was issued to the people, leniency towards debtors was recommended, and effective measures were adopted. It established a post office at Portsmouth and provided for post riders to other points. It resolved "to raise immediately Two Thousand Effective Men in this Province Including officers & those of this Province already in the service;" "that every member pledge his Honor & Estate in the name of his Constituents to pay their proportion of maintaining and paying the officers & soldiers of the above number while in the service;" and "that the Selectmen of the several Towns & Districts within this colony be desired to furnish the soldiers who shall enlist from their respective Towns and districts with good & sufficient Blankets & render their accounts to the Committee of Supplies." Col. Matthew Thornton, Col. Josiah Bartlett, Capt. Wm. Whipple, Col. Nathaniel Folsom and Ebenezer Thompson, Esq., were appointed the committee of safety. Col. Nicholas Gilman and six others were appointed a committee of supplies.

The 2,000 men raised were divided into three regiments of ten companies each, sixty-two men to the company. Stark, by far the most experienced and capable soldier in the province, was indignant because political influence had placed Folsom, who had remained at home where he could meet the members of the convention, over him, who had been at the front in command of the troops. But the colonelcy of the First regiment was left open for Stark if he chose to accept it, and Enoch Poor of Exeter was appointed colonel of the Second.

Stark was sent for and appeared before the convention, explained his conduct, which had been somewhat insubordinate towards Gen. Folsom, and accepted the commission offered him. Isaac Wyman of Keene was confirmed as lieutenant colonel and Andrew McClary of Epsom as major of the same regiment.

Poor's regiment, raised in the eastern and central parts of the province, was held for the protection of the New Hampshire coast, and did not join the main army until after the battle of Bunker Hill.

Upon the alarm of the 19th of April, James Reed of Fitzwilliam, afterwards for many years a resident of Keene, who had been a captain in the French and Indian wars and had risen to the rank of lieutenant colonel, had hastened to the front at the head of a company of volunteers and joined the other New Hampshire troops. Finding the army at Cambridge in an unorganized condition, he "beat up" for volunteers for the purpose of forming a regiment. He also engaged Andrew Colburn, of Marlboro, a veteran of the Indian wars, who afterwards rose to the rank of lieutenant colonel, and others, to enlist men for him in Cheshire county. He went to Exeter and laid before members of the convention his claims to a commission, and on the 1st day of June was appointed colonel of the Third regiment. Israel Gilman, of Exeter, was appointed lieutenant colonel, Nathan Hale, of Rindge, major; and ten recruiting officers were appointed to enlist men to complete his regiment, eight of whom were afterwards captains under him. Under verbal orders from Gen. Folsom, he came immediately to Cheshire county, collected the recruits that had been enlisted for him, marched them to Cambridge, reported to Gen. Ward on the 12th, and was directed to go to Medford, where his other companies had been sent from Cambridge, and collect his recruits; and he received the following written order:

"Head Quarters, June the 12th 1775.

"GENERAL ORDERS—That Coll. Reed quarter his Regiment in the houses near Charlestown Neck and keep all necessary Guards between his Barracks and the Ferrey and on Bunker's Hill.

(Signed) "J. Ward Sectary Copy for James Reed."

Stark had more than ten companies and two of his—those of Captains Whitcomb of Swanzey and Thomas of Rindge—were transferred to Reed, who marched his regiment of ten companies, numbering more than five hundred men present for duty, to Charlestown Neck on the 13th,

and posted a guard of one captain, two lieutenants and forty-eight men as directed.

On the afternoon of Friday, the 16th, Gen. Ward placed Col. William Prescott of Pepperell in command of a detachment of a little less than 1,000 men, including two pieces of artillery and a company of Connecticut troops under Capt. Knowlton, with orders to take all the intrenching tools, their packs, and provisions for twenty-four hours, and proceed to Charlestown Neck.¹ The detachment paraded on Cambridge common—ordered at 6 o'clock but somewhat delayed—a ration of rum was served to the men from a hogshead brought to the spot, and at 9 o'clock, after a prayer by President Langdon of Harvard college, the column moved, silently, with two sergeants to lead the way, carrying dark lanterns open only to the rear.

Halting within the lines of Col. Reed's regiment, Prescott there received further orders to fortify Bunker's hill and hold his ground until relieved. Gen. Ward's chief engineer, the veteran Col. Gridley, was with him to lay out the works; and Gen. Putnam and other officers of high rank were also with him, but without commands.

Bunker's hill, one mile from the point where the British landed, sloped towards the bay, and, about half way down the ridge, rose again in a smaller elevation called Breed's hill. This point was believed by those experienced officers to be the better position and was selected as the place for the redoubt. The plan of the fortifications was marked out, the sentinels placed along the shore, and at midnight the work began. Strict silence was enjoined upon the men, for six vessels of war carrying about 170 guns and 1,000 men lay within range, and the "All's well!" of the British sentinels along the Boston shore could be distinctly heard. So vigorously was the work pushed that at daylight, a little after 3 o'clock, there was a breastwork six feet high on every escarpment of the redoubt. From the northern angle a ditch and breastwork were extended about 100 yards towards Mystic river. All sides

¹ A somewhat extended account of the battle is given for the reasons that it was the bloodiest fight that could be called a "battle," in proportion to the numbers engaged, that has ever been fought on American soil; and that Keene had a larger proportion of its men in that battle than in any other, in any war.

of the hill were open fields, except on the south and southwest, where lay the village of Charlestown.

As daylight disclosed the works on the hill, the sentinels on the vessels gave the alarm. Fire was immediately opened from the men-of-war, and soon afterwards from the battery on Copp's hill. Both armies and the inhabitants of Boston and the surrounding towns were rudely awakened to a great and memorable day; and there was excitement and confusion in both camps. Prescott foresaw the impending attack and called for reinforcements.

Stark with his regiment of more than 600 men, larger, better appointed, and better disciplined than any other in the army, lay at Medford. Early in the morning Gen. Ward sent him an order to reinforce Prescott with 200 men.¹ He immediately detailed Lt. Col. Wyman to command the detachment, and sent them forward as soon as they could be supplied with ammunition. Anxious to know the exact condition of affairs, he soon afterwards mounted his horse and galloped across the Neck and over the hills to the redoubt, passing Col. Wyman with his detachment in the hollow between Winter and Ploughed hills, about two miles from the redoubt, and quickly returned to his regiment.

Urged by the Massachusetts committee of safety, at 11 o'clock² Gen. Ward sent orders to both Stark and Reed to reinforce Prescott with their whole force. But Stark was four miles away and ammunition had not been distributed except to guards and pickets. He immediately drew up his men in front of the building used for an arsenal, and each man was given a gill cup of powder, fifteen balls³ and one spare flint. A few cartridges were made, but very few of the men had cartridge-boxes, or paper for cartridges. Some took their powder in powder-horns, others in their waistcoat pockets. Their guns were of various calibres and some of the balls had to be hammered and others wound with patches to make them fit. Col. Reed's men

¹Gen. Ward feared to weaken his centre lest he should be attacked at that point, and therefore reinforced Prescott from his left wing.

²Stark stated that it was "about 2 o'clock" when he received the order; but he was on the ground before the battle began, which was "about 3 o'clock."

³Lead had been taken from the organ pipes in the church at Cambridge and wherever it could be obtained and run into bullets.

were supplied in the same way and under the same difficulties. It took two hours to prepare the ammunition. Then, "about one o'clock," the veteran colonel began his march, with the roar of the British cannon—the prelude of the battle—testing the nerves of his men.

Crossing the Neck at a deliberate pace under a raking fire from some of the ships—which had deterred other troops, who were lying there—a young captain¹ marching by the colonel's side ventured to suggest that it might be well to quicken the step. Stark's reply was: "One fresh man in action is worth ten tired² ones," and he would not hasten. A little before 3 o'clock he arrived near the ground; ³ halted his column for a few minutes; went forward to speak with Prescott; ⁴ returned to his men; made them a short, spirited address; had them give three cheers, and then moved them to the left, and took position about 200 yards to the rear of the fortifications, his line extending down to Mystic river, to prevent a flank movement by the enemy in that direction. It was ebb tide, the beach at that place was strewn with rocks, and Stark directed his men to throw those up for a breastwork at that end of the line.

Col. Reed had moved his regiment to the front and formed on Capt. Knowlton's left—who had taken position with his company of Connecticut troops in rear of the redoubt, facing Mystic river—Reed's line turning at nearly a right angle towards the river. Stark now formed on his left, completing the line from the fortifications to the water's edge, with the exception of a gap of about 100 yards next to the ditch and breastwork, which was covered by the fire of the New Hampshire regiments. Two companies of artillery took position in this gap, but withdrew to the rear soon after the battle began and did little service. Capt. Crosby's company of Reed's regiment was detached and stationed, with other troops, on Main street,

¹ Henry Dearborn of Nottingham, afterwards, in the war of 1812, a major general and commander-in-chief of the United States army.

² Some quotations make him say *fatigued*, but he was not the man to use a long French word when a short English one was better.

³ Yankee Doodle had been played by the British in ridicule of the Provincials, who now used it for the first time in defiance of the British. (Address of Rev. Geo. E. Ellis, June 17, 1841.)

⁴ Communication to New Hampshire Patriot in 1818, by Major Joseph Dow, of Hampton Falls, who was present in Stark's regiment.

at the foot of Breed's hill, forming the extreme right of the line and protecting that flank. The day was hot, and many of the men, particularly of Reed's regiment, whose camp was near the battle ground, left their packs and some even their coats, expecting to return for them, and they were afterwards paid for clothing and other articles lost that day.

The day before, the grass on the north slope of the hill had been cut for hay and still lay on the ground. A breastwork, which Capt. Knowlton's men had begun, was made along the greater part of the New Hampshire line, where there was a rail fence, by bringing others that stood near and setting them to make two parallel lines¹ about three feet apart and filling the space with the hay, well trod in, which the men brought in their arms.² Hay packed in that way would stop many of the musket balls, as they were fired in those days. A British letter after the battle says, "It was found to be the strongest post ever occupied by any set of men."

The New Hampshire line thus formed two sides of a rectangle which the enemy must enter to make their attack on that wing. And this was the key to the position, because the only sensible move the British could make was to direct their main attack against this line with the view of turning the American left and getting in rear of the redoubt. And that was exactly what they did. It was here that Gen. Howe himself commanded, with his grenadiers and light infantry, with field artillery—"the flower of his troops"—and the most sanguinary fighting was done in the two first assaults.

It was Saturday afternoon. The British had begun to land from their boats at 1 o'clock. At 3 o'clock, they had about 3,000 men on the ground, with Gen. Howe in command. The barges were sent back to the Boston side, to

¹ The fence that was already there a part of the distance, was a low stone wall topped with two rails, and another line of posts and rails was set in front to hold the hay. This was made chiefly by Reed's and Knowlton's men, probably ordered by Putnam, as Stark arrived only a few minutes before the battle began.

² I had this when a boy from my grandfather, Nehemiah Wright, who was present in Reed's regiment, and assisted in building those fences and fired from behind them; and tradition brought down the same account from my grandfather, Samuel Griffin, who was also present in the same regiment, and fought behind the rail fence.—S. G. G.

prevent the flight of the men—for then it was “conquer or die.” “They were supplied with large tubs of drink to prepare them for the onset.”¹

They formed in two columns, the left, under Gen. Pigot, directed against the redoubt, the right, as stated above, making the principal attack against the rail fence.

On our side the field officers passed along the lines, encouraging the men and giving them directions to hold their fire until the British were close upon them; telling them to “fire low;” “aim at the waist;” “powder is scarce, don’t waste it;” “wait till you can see the whites of their eyes.” Stark stepped out about forty yards in front, stuck a stick in the ground, and said to his men: “Don’t fire a shot till the redcoats come up to that stick and I say the word.”

The British advanced with steady step, in closed columns, halting and deploying when well up towards our lines with the coolness and precision of a dress parade; and then the line of battle moved forward in perfect order, halting to fire now and then, but without aim and shooting over and doing little harm.

When they had reached the mark, “Fire!” shouted Stark, and a deadly volley of rattling musketry burst from the whole line followed by another as soon as they could load. Nothing could withstand such a fire. The British wavered, broke and fled. The smoke lifted and disclosed the ground strewn with dead and dying, and hundreds were wounded who were able to escape, but not to return. A few of our men rushed forward to pursue, but were restrained by their officers.

By great exertions of their officers the British were rallied at the water’s edge and reformed; and again they advanced to the charge. Charlestown was set on fire and destroyed, but most of the inhabitants had fled, not more than two or three hundred remaining of a population of between two and three thousand.

that purpose, and urging forward reinforcements, very few of whom reached the front line; and there was great confusion on that part of the field. Putnam and Col. Gerrish had 1,000 to 1,500 men on Bunker's hill and behind it, only half a mile away, who gave Stark and Prescott no assistance and took no part in the action;¹ but suffered loss in the retreat.

The British advanced as steadily as at first. The patriot fire was withheld until they were even nearer than before, and when they were within thirty yards another deadly volley burst upon them, and again they broke and fled in disorder. The slaughter was even greater than before.

Again by the determined efforts of their officers they were rallied—in some cases by blows and other force—reinforcements were sent them, and Gen. Clinton hastened across from Boston to aid in the assault.

On the patriots' side a few scattering squads of reinforcements joined them, but too late and too few to be effective. Their ammunition was now almost wholly expended. A few artillery cartridges remained and those were broken open and the powder distributed among the infantry.

The British officers knew the Americans had but little ammunition, and this information, spread among their troops, encouraged them to renew the fight. This time the assault was concentrated on the redoubt. Gen. Howe directed his men to lay off their knapsacks, advance in column, reserve their fire, and carry the works at the point of the bayonet.

The patriots could give no more such volleys as before, for they were out of powder; and they had almost no bayonets with which to meet such a charge.

To aid his movement and insure success, Howe advanced a strong column of the grenadiers of his right wing, with artillery, which, instead of attacking the New Hampshire troops at the rail fence, turned to the works on the hill, placed their cannon to enfilade the breastwork running

¹Gerrish was cashiered for cowardice, and "Col. Prescott never ceased to reprobate Putnam for his behavior that day," although he exhibited great personal courage. Stark also denounced him for his lack of judgment.

out from the north angle, and swept that part of the works with a fire so destructive that the Americans were forced to abandon it. The British then advanced and entered the redoubt by the rear, and Prescott and his men were compelled to retreat.

During this last assault the New Hampshire men lay behind the rail fence, powerless to drive back the British right wing from want of ammunition. Half a dozen more rounds to each man would have saved the day. As it was, seeing the enemy on their right flank and themselves liable to be cut off, a retreat was ordered and our New Hampshire men retired over Bunker's hill in comparatively good order, holding the enemy in check and aiding Prescott and his men to escape. These, with the disorganized troops with Putnam and Gerrish, formed a crowd of fugitives retreating over and beyond the hill upon whom the British turned their fire, and the heaviest loss of the day on the American side was on that ground. Some of the enemy's vessels in Mystic river also had a cross fire on them as they passed the Neck, and there the gallant McClary, major of Stark's regiment, was killed by a cannon ball. He had "hastened to the rear for bandages and was returning to his command." The battle lasted one hour and a half.

That night the New Hampshire troops slept on their arms at Winter hill, one mile from Bunker's hill, and the next day began to intrench. All along the line defensive works were renewed, and the siege of Boston began in earnest. The British occupied Bunker's hill and intrenched.

The loss of the enemy was not less than eleven hundred men, killed and wounded, or about thirty-three per cent of their whole number engaged.¹ Speaking of the ground in his front, Stark said: "The dead lay as thick as sheep in a fold."² Of a veteran regiment of Welsh

¹ Rev. Geo. B. Ellis in his "History of the Battle of Bunker's Hill," puts the British force at 5,000; but that is evidently an exaggeration of the number actually engaged. Gage reported a loss of 1,054, which, of course, would be as favorable as he could make it. Well informed Americans believed it to be not less than 1,500.

² "An eye-witness counted the next day, in front of the wall, betwixt the Mystic and the swarded ground of the hill, ninety-six dead bodies, and this was after the officers and the wounded had been removed." (Adjutant General's Report, page 272.)

fusileers, 700 strong, in front of the New Hampshire line, only 83 were present for duty the next day.¹

Conclusive proof of the importance of the position and work of the New Hampshire troops on that day, is found in the fact that the loss of the grenadiers² and light infantry in their front was almost two-thirds of their whole number of killed and wounded, or about double the average of the British loss on that day.³

Rev. Geo. E. Ellis, already referred to, and one or two other writers represent that Putnam commanded the whole line to the left of the redoubt, but nearly all articles published soon after the event agree that Putnam had no command whatever except two companies from Connecticut. Stark and Reed each commanded his own regiment, but Stark, being the senior officer and having been placed by the votes of the field officers on the 26th of April in charge of all the New Hampshire troops, was really in command of the whole New Hampshire line, and should share with Prescott the honor of the chief command at Bunker Hill.

"The battle began with the intention of flanking the redoubt by breaking the fence line. It ended by flanking the fence by carrying the redoubt. The New Hampshire and Connecticut men, with such Massachusetts men as were with them, were not beaten that day; they were simply flanked."⁴

"We have the full conviction that the time will come, when the whole nation will give the honors of the battle of Bunker Hill largely to the common soldiers of New Hampshire, who, more than any other men, fought it. * * * * The men at the redoubt who patiently endured and suffered to the end, are worthy of all honor. But the battle was fought chiefly by the soldiers of New Hampshire, whose muskets killed and wounded probably two

¹ "Our light infantry was served up in companies against the grass fence, without being able to penetrate;—indeed how could we penetrate? Most of our grenadiers and light infantry, the moment of presenting themselves, lost three-fourths, and many nine-tenths of their men. Some had only eight and nine men a company left; some only three, four and five." (Letter of English officer, dated July 5, 1775.)

² "All the grenadiers of the 4th, or King's regiment (one company), were killed or wounded except four; and of the grenadiers of the 23d, or Royal Welsh Fusileers, only three remained that were not killed or wounded. (Letter of Lieut. John Clarke of the British army.)

³ "A few days ago the shattered remains of the 18th regiment of foot, which was engaged in the action at Bunker's Hill, and reduced to only twenty-five men, arrived at Maldstone." (British newspaper, March 5, 1776.)

⁴ Tarbox's Life of Israel Putnam, page 197.

out of three in that list of ten hundred and fifty-four, which General Gage reported to the home government.

"If a monument is to be erected upon that battle ground to any colonel, it should be to Colonel Stark of New Hampshire, whose services in the strife were more important than those of any other man bearing that title."¹ And he might have said, or any other title.

The loss of the Americans was about 450, or nearly thirty per cent of their whole number actually engaged in the fight; for the whole number in their line of battle, including the redoubt, according to the most careful investigations, could not have been much above 1,700 men. Of those more than 1,100² were from New Hampshire. Stark and Reed, according to their own reports, had fully 1,000 in their two regiments after allowing for all absentees. Capt. Reuben Dow, of Hollis, had a whole company in Prescott's regiment; and there were as many more, from that and other New Hampshire towns in the same and other commands, in the front line. Allowing 200 to Connecticut, leaves 400 as the number furnished by Massachusetts, which is more than twice as many as Col. Prescott himself estimated.

Nearly all the Massachusetts regiments named as being in the fight never reached the line of battle, but were present only at the rear and in the retreat.

Worn out with the fatigues of the night Prescott's men had slipped away for rest and for the refreshments which had been promised but never came, or were led away by Putnam with intrenching tools, until he was left, when the action begun, with about 150 men. In his letter to John Adams, written by request, dated August 25, 1775, Prescott distinctly states that his engineer forsook him; that (speaking of the artillery fire that opened on them just before sunrise) "About this time, the above field officers (Col. Bridge and one or two others) being indisposed, could render me but little service, and the most of the men under their command deserted the party. The

¹ Tarbox's *Life of Israel Putnam*, pages 339-40.

² Recent investigations by Col. Geo. C. Gilmore, president of the board of trustees of the New Hampshire State library and special commissioner on this subject appointed by the governor and council, place the number of New Hampshire soldiers present in the battle above 1,600. But some of them were in the retreat only.

enemy continuing an incessant fire with their artillery, about 2 o'clock in the afternoon, on the seventeenth, the enemy began to land at a northeasterly point from the fort, and I ordered the train, with two field-pieces, to go and oppose them, and the Connecticut forces to support them; but the train marched a different course, and I believe those sent to their support followed, I suppose to Bunker's Hill. * * * * About an hour after the enemy landed, they began to march to the attack in three columns. I commanded my Lieut. Col. Robinson and Major Woods, each with a detachment, to flank the enemy, who, I have reason to think, behaved with prudence and courage. I was now left with perhaps one hundred and fifty men in the fort." And the detachments of Robinson and Woods must have been small.

Tracing the movements of our Keene men, we learn that, the night before the battle, Capt. Stiles, who was still in Stark's regiment, was detailed with half his company to guard the premises—"Ten Hill Farm"—of Robert Temple, a tory, and was not relieved until 10 o'clock the next morning, when the party was ordered to Medford for refreshments and thence to Ploughed hill near the Neck, to wait for further orders; that they arrived there about half past 2 o'clock, just before the action began; that Gen. Putnam came at full gallop across the Neck to Capt. Stiles and addressing the men said, "Up, my brave boys, for God's sake; we drive them;" that Capt. Stiles immediately led his men in single file across the Neck and arrived at Breed's hill in time to take part in the battle. This is taken from a sworn statement made in June, 1818, by Samuel Bassett of Keene, fifer in Stiles's company, who was with this detached party. He carried his musket in the action and states that he discharged five or six rounds and received a flesh wound in his thigh (so slight that he was not reported wounded, as is often the case in battle), after which several minutes elapsed before the retreat began.

The other half of Stiles's company remained with the regiment and went to the front, either with Lt. Col. Wyman "early in the morning," or with Col. Stark in the

afternoon. Asahel Nims, a sergeant in Stiles's company, was killed in the action—tradition says "at the rail fence." His brother Eliakim was with him at the time, in the same company. Stephen Day was mortally and Charles Rice severely wounded. Therefore there can be no doubt that the Keene company was present in the front line of battle.

Stark does not mention Stiles and his company in his report of the battle, probably for what he deemed sufficient reasons, namely, that Stiles had been detailed with half his company and had not rejoined the regiment; that he had more companies than he was entitled to and Stiles's was soon afterwards transferred to another regiment, and it appears that such an arrangement had already been made but not yet consummated; therefore he may have felt that he had no control over that company.

Lt. Col. Wyman had been sent, as stated, with 200 men to reinforce Prescott, but he has never been reported as having reached the redoubt, and from all accounts it is altogether probable that Putnam seized that detachment to work on his intrenchments on Bunker's hill; and that when Stark passed them on his march to the front he took Wyman and his men with him; for Stark was not the man to allow his regiment to be divided at such a time by an officer who had no authority, or to leave a part of it digging ditches at the rear when he was ordered into action with "the whole of my regiment."¹ Major Dow, already referred to, also states that that detachment joined the regiment as it passed Bunker's hill.

That Col. Wyman did good service somewhere that day is evident from the fact he was soon afterwards recommended for promotion by Gen. Folsom, who stated that "he has behaved prudently, courageously and very much like a gentleman;" and the next year he was promoted to the rank of colonel and given the command of a regiment in the Continental army.

Besides the thirty-six men from Keene already named who were in the battle, John Brown² and Robert Worsley³

¹ Stark's Report.

² Brown is on one roll as from Marlboro, but he was a member of the militia company here in 1773, and his name appears on the records as a town officer of Keene.

³ Worsley has been claimed as a resident of Marlboro, but his enlistment and service are credited to Keene.

were in the company of Capt. Benjamin Mann of Mason; and Joshua Ellis and Abraham Griffin (or Griffith), in that of Capt. Jonathan Whitcomb of Swanzey—all in Reed's regiment. Ellis was a son of Lieut. Timothy Ellis, seventeen years old, and was severely wounded.

Timothy Crossfield, nineteen years old, enlisted in the company of Capt. Edward Burbeck, of the artillery, on the 1st day of July—fourteen days after the battle—as Ebenezer Billings had done on the 29th of June from Stiles's company. Possibly Crossfield was in the battle; and he may have been one of the thirty who marched from Keene on the 21st of April, enlisting into some other company, as several others did. Gilmore has him on his list as in the battle, and from Stiles's company; but the latter statement is evidently an error as his name does not appear on any one of Stiles's rolls; and we find no other evidence of his having been in the service previous to July 1.

Thomas Douglass of Keene enlisted in Gould's company, Sargent's regiment, in time to join Arnold's expedition to Canada in August and he may have been in the battle—and even one of the immortal thirty—under similar conditions as Crossfield, but we have no farther record of him. Robert Worsley also joined the expedition to Canada.

These make in all forty men from Keene in the battle of Bunker Hill—forty-two if Crossfield and Douglass were there—and there may have been others whose names are lost. That was more than five per cent of the whole number of inhabitants in the town at that time.

Capt. Stiles and his company remained in Stark's regiment until the 3d day of July. On that day, or between that and the 7th they were transferred, with the company of Capt. Wm. Scott of Peterboro, to the regiment of Col. Paul Dudley Sargent of Amherst, N. H., in the service of Massachusetts. No roll of enlistment of the Keene company in Stark's regiment has been found, but the enlistments into Sargent's regiment were dated back to the time the men left home, those of most of our Keene men being April 21. Their term was for eight months.

The following roll does not appear in the New

Hampshire Revolutionary Rolls, but is taken from those of Massachusetts.

“Roll of Capt. Jeremiah Stiles’s company in Col. Paul Dudley Sargent’s regiment, August 1st, 1775.

Men's names.	Town.	Rank.	Time enlisted.
Jeremiah Stiles,	Keene,	Captain,	April 21.
Lemuel Holmes,	Walpole,	Lieutenant,	April 21.
John Griggs,	Keene,	Ensign,	April 21.
Samuel White,	Keene,	Sergeant,	April 21.
Ebenezer Cook,	Keene,	Sergeant,	May 15.
Ezra Metcalf,	Keene,	Sergeant,	April 21.
Asahel Nims,	Keene,	Sergeant,	April 21.
Benjamin Archer,	Keene,	Sergeant,	May 26.
Frederic Tubbs,	Marlow,	Corporal,	April 21.
Luke Metcalf,	Keene,	Corporal,	April 21.
Benjamin Ellis,	Keene,	Corporal,	April 21.
Niles Beckwith,	Lamster,	Corporal,	May 15.
David Hubbard,	Ackworth,	Drummer,	April 21.
Samuel Bassett,	Keene,	Freamer,	April 21.
David Adams,	Gilsum,	Private,	May 15.
John Baker,	Rockingham,	Private,	May 15.
Robert Busby,	Medford,	Private,	May 15.
Henry Bemis,	Packersfield,	Private,	April 21.
Elijah Benton,	Surry,	Private,	July 14.
Ebenezer Billings,	Keene,	Private,	April 21.
Simeon Church,	Marlow,	Private,	April 21.
Thomas Church,	Gilsum,	Private,	May 15.
Iddo Church,	Gilsum,	Private,	May 15.
Nathan Closson,	Walpole,	Private,	May 15.
Thomas Clark,	Pomphrett,	Private,	April 21.
Stephen Day,	Keene,	Private,	April 21.
Jesse Dassance,	Keene,	Private,	April 21.
Thomas Dart,	Surry,	Private,	July 14.
Roger Dart,	Surry,	Private,	July 14.
Timothy Dewey,	Gilsum,	Private,	April 21.
Caleb Ellis,	Keene,	Private,	April 21.
James Eddy,	Keene,	Private,	April 21.
John Fletcher,	Walpole,	Private,	April 21.
Samuel Fletcher,	Marlow,	Private,	April 21.
Joshua Fuller,	Surry,	Private,	July 14.
Silas French,	Keene,	Private,	July 14.
Isaac Griswold,	Gilsum,	Private,	April 21.
Hugh Gray,	Keene,	Private,	April 21.
William Gray,	Keene,	Private,	May 15.
Joseph Gray,	Keene,	Private,	May 15.
David Howard,	Marlow,	Private,	April 21.
Joseph Howard,	Marlow,	Private,	April 21.
Nathan Hayward,	Surry,	Private,	July 14.

Nathan Huntley,	Marlow,	Private,	April 21.
Hannaniah Hall,	Keene,	Private,	May 15.
Benjamin Hall,	Keene,	Private,	May 15.
Samuel Hall,	Rockingham,	Private,	May 15.
David Harris,	Keene,	Private,	May 8.
Tilley Howe,	Keene,	Private,	July 14.
Jehiel Holdridge,	Gilsum,	Private,	April 21.
William Joyner,	Walpole,	Private,	July 14.
Eli Lewis,	Marlow,	Private,	April 21.
Stephen Larrabee,	Keene,	Private,	May 8.
Thomas Morse,	Keene,	Private,	May 15.
Jeremiah Mack,	Marlow,	Private,	May 15.
Ezra Morse,	Dublin,	Private,	July 14.
Eliakim Nims,	Keene,	Private,	April 21.
Charles Rice,	Surry,	Private,	April 21.
Aquilla Russell,	Walpole,	Private,	April 21.
John Slade,	Alstead,	Private,	April 21.
Daniel Stone,	Keene,	Private,	April 21.
Joseph Thatcher,	Keene,	Private,	April 21.
Elisha Willis,	Keene,	Private,	April 21.
Daniel Willson,	Keene,	Private,	April 21.
Daniel Wright,	Gilsum,	Private,	April 21.
Joseph Young,	Gilsum,	Private,	April 21.
William Bradley,	Keene,	Private,	April 21.
John Kelly,	Walpole,	Private,	April 21.

“Each man supplied himself with a gun and cartridge box.

“Asahel Nims Died in Battle June 17th 1775.

“Benjamin Archer appointed Serg't June y^e 18, 1775.

“Ebenezer Billings Inlisted into the Train of Artillery, June the 29th 1775.

“Stephen Day Died August 17th 1775. (Entered later.)

“The above is a True Muster Roll of my Company according to the Best of my Knowledge.

Jerh Stiles, Capt.”

(Jonathan Wheeler, Keene, appears on a later roll.)

When the news of the battle reached New Hampshire the committee of safety ordered Col. Poor with nine companies of his regiment to the front; and Gen. Folsom arrived at Medford on the 20th and took command of the New Hampshire troops. Poor was stationed at Medford, but Stark and Reed held Winter hill and carried forward their intrenching; and the works thrown up by them were more formidable and complete than any others on the line. Stark's regiment was considered the finest in

the army, a model in discipline and efficiency, and Reed's was one of the best.

The British intrenched on Bunker's hill and on Boston Neck; and an attack was expected at any time.

The quarrel between Gen. Folsom and Col. Stark caused them both to be passed by, and congress appointed John Sullivan the brigadier general for New Hampshire. Early in July, Gen. Sullivan appeared at Cambridge with his appointment and was assigned to the command of a brigade composed of the three New Hampshire regiments, with three others from Massachusetts under Cols. Nixon, Mansfield and Doolittle, numbering in all about 3,000 men, in the division of Gen. Charles Lee, who commanded the left wing of the army. The New Hampshire regiments now numbered 1,664 men and the whole army about 17,000. It was at this time that the Keene company was transferred from Stark's to Sargent's regiment, in the centre division of the army under Gen. Putnam, and was stationed at Cambridge.

The term of enlistment of our Keene men expired with the year and Col. Wyman, with Capt. Stiles and most of his men, came home.

The Sixth regiment of the state militia remained the same in extent of territory as in 1773, and was still commanded by Col. Josiah Willard of Winchester, who had strong tory proclivities. To depose him from that command and yet not humiliate him to the extent of driving him over to the enemy, the provincial congress divided his regiment into three, forming all the towns in the southwest corner of Cheshire county, including Surry and Gilsun, into one regiment, numbered the Thirteenth, and appointed Samuel Ashley of Winchester colonel, Joseph Hammond of Swanzy lieutenant colonel, Isaac Butterfield first major, and Timothy Ellis of Keene second major.¹ The other towns in Willard's regiment, north of Westmoreland and Gilsun, were formed into the Fifteenth, with

¹Those numbers were soon afterwards changed. In 1779 and in 1784 Keene, with all the corner towns, was again in the Sixth, but in 1792, Keene, Westmoreland, Walpole, Surry, Gilsun and Sullivan were numbered the Twentieth regiment, while Hinsdale, Winchester, Richmond, Swanzy and Chesterfield retained the old number, 6; and in both cases the numbers remained the same as long as the system lasted.

Benjamin Bellows of Walpole, colonel; and the Fourteenth was commanded by Col. Enoch Hale of Rindge.

During all these months the colonies were struggling with the great problems of government and carrying on war without powers delegated by the people, or a constitution to govern their conduct. The laws of the old regime were dead letters, the courts were suspended, and there was great confusion and uncertainty in the administration of civil affairs.

There was no authorized power to issue money, but money must be had. Taxes were levied by the towns and by the colony; the people were patriotic and disposed to pay, but currency was distressingly scarce and payment was almost impossible. The colony of New Hampshire had no means of paying its soldiers, or of purchasing military supplies and provisions.

On the 26th of May, 1775, the convention at Exeter authorized its committee of supplies to "Borrow on the faith of this Colony any sum not exceeding ten Thousand Pounds L M as the Committee find necessary to answer the directions from the Comm^t of Safety. And this Convention for themselves & Constituents plight their faith and Estates to said Committee of supplies as their Bondmen to all intents & purposes for the payment of whatever sum they hire or Borrow in consequence of this vote." On the 9th of June the convention authorized the receiver general of the colony "to give his Notes of hand on the faith of this Colony" for ten thousand and fifty pounds, and, in July, another issue of ten thousand pounds was ordered; and these emissions continued from time to time.

The general congress had nothing but the faith of the people in a tentative and unorganized government of a rebellion upon which to base the issue of money, but "Necessity knows no law," and in June it issued \$2,000,000 in "bills of credit," followed soon afterwards by other issues. In these ways, notwithstanding the disastrous experience of the colonies with paper money in former years, the people were supplied with a transient currency; but they were distrustful of it and its value soon began to depreciate.

The faith of the people in their provincial congress began to wane; those congresses lost confidence in themselves and in their power and ability to provide a proper government for the people; and for a time that of New Hampshire declined to act. In October, her delegates in the Continental congress asked that New Hampshire be allowed to institute a civil government, and on the 3d of November, 1775, leave was granted to call a convention of representatives with power to "Establish such a Form of Government as in their Judgement will best Produce the Happiness of the People, & most Effectually Secure Peace and good order in the Province During the Continuance of the Present Dispute between Great Britain & the Colonies."

The convention was called, each town being allowed one representative except the smaller ones, which were classed in groups of two or more, and Amherst, Chester, Dover, Exeter and Londonderry, which were allowed two each, and Portsmouth three. Among other rules for its guidance it was provided: "That every Legal Inhabitant Paying Taxes shall be a voter; That every Person Elected shall have a Real Estate in this Colony of the value of Two Hundred Pounds lawful money; That no person be allowed a seat in congress who shall by themselves, or any Person at their Desire Treat with Liquors &c any Electors with an apparent view of gaining their Votes, or by Treating after an Election on that Account." That convention met on the 21st of December and was called the Fifth Provincial congress. Keene was represented by Major Timothy Ellis.

The Fourth Provincial congress had dissolved on the 15th of November, 1775, after passing a resolution recommending the people to continue in their usual methods of conducting their town affairs under the former laws, raising and collecting taxes and sustaining the action of their selectmen, constables and other officers. It had been in session since the 17th of May and had transacted a large amount of very important business, as already stated, without constitutional law, but sustained by the approval of the people. Major Timothy Ellis represented Keene and Surry in that congress, was in attendance forty days, and

drew £10 for attendance and £5 for 705 miles travel for both towns.

No judicial courts were held in Cheshire county from 1774 to 1778, and the towns, finding themselves under no general government, instituted governments of their own and enacted laws for the management of their town affairs. Warrants for town meetings were headed simply, Cheshire, ss., and were called by the town clerk upon the order of the selectmen.

A spirited town meeting was held in Keene on the 7th of December, 1775, Thomas Baker, moderator, and Silas Cooke, clerk pro. tem. One of the articles in the warrant was, "to see if it be the mind of the town, that the names of those persons, who buy, sell, or make use of bohea tea, be advertised in the public prints." That article passed in the negative; but "Maj^r Ellis John Houghton Eliphalet Briggs Jun^r, Joseph Blake and Daniel Kingsbury" were chosen "a Committee of Inspection to see that the Resolves of the Continental Congress be complied with." The meeting then "unanimously adopted the following Resolves, which may be termed the Statute Law of Keene."

"Whereas, by the unhappy disputes now subsisting between Great Britain and the American Colonies, the laws of several of them have been entirely subverted, or wholly neglected, to the great detriment of society, and of individuals, whereby many disorderly persons, taking undue advantage of the times, as a cloak to put their revengeful designs in execution, do wickedly and maliciously threaten to abuse and destroy the persons and property of many of the good and wholesome inhabitants of the land, and the Executive power being thrown by; and the Congresses, neither Continental or Provincial, have, as yet, found out, or published, any method or system of government, for the security of our persons or property; and until such a system as they in their wisdom shall see fit, or some other, be proposed,—

"We, the inhabitants of the town of Keene, in the county of Cheshire, and province of New-Hampshire, legally convened, being desirous of order and good government, and for the security of our lives, persons and property, do pass the following Resolves:

"1st. It is Resolved, that a committee of three good and steady men of the town, be chosen to act upon, and a proper officer appointed, to prosecute the Resolves hereafter mentioned.

"2d. Whereas, profane cursing and swearing are highly provoking to Almighty God, and offensive to every true Christian, which we fear, if not discountenanced, will provoke the Divine Majesty to bring heavy judgments upon us, and still heavier, deliver us up to the desire of our enemies; to prevent cursing and swearing, be it Resolved, that if any person, or persons, shall profanely curse or swear, and shall be thereof convicted, before the committee, by sufficient witnesses, or by confession of the party, every such offender shall forfeit and pay to the committee, for the use of the poor of said town, a sum not exceeding three shillings, nor less than one; according to the repeatedness of the offense; and pay cost of prosecution, which cost shall be ascertained by the committee, before whom the person shall be convicted; and in case any person, convicted as aforesaid, shall refuse to pay the sum or sums, so forfeited and adjudged, he, she or they shall be immediately committed to the common gaol, not exceeding ten days, nor less than three, for said forfeiture, and until he pay all just costs.

"3d. Whereas, it is highly necessary that every person, of able body, should betake himself to some honest calling, and not misspend their time in loitering and tipping, in licensed houses, or elsewhere, in this town; to prevent which,

"Be it Resolved, that if any person or persons, fit and able to work, shall refuse so to do, but loiter and misspend his or their time, wander from place to place, or otherwise disorder themselves, by drinking or tipping in any of the licensed houses, or elsewhere, in this town, after nine o'clock at night, or continue in any of the aforesaid houses above the space of one hour, unless on necessary business, all such persons, being convicted of any of the aforesaid articles, before said committee, by sufficient witnesses, shall, for every such offense, forfeit and pay to the said committee, for the use of the poor of said town, the sum of two shillings, and all just costs of trial, which shall be adjudged by said committee, and in case any person, convicted as aforesaid, shall refuse to pay the sum or sums, so forfeited and adjudged, he or they, shall be committed to the common gaol, there to remain not exceeding ten days, nor less than three days, for said forfeiture, and until he pay all just costs.

"4th. Whereas, personal abuse tends to promote ill blood and discord among society, to prevent which, be it Resolved, that if any person or persons shall smite, or strike, or threaten to abuse, or destroy, the person or property of another, he or they, so offending, shall, for the

first offense, pay to the said committee, for the use of the poor of said town, the sum of five shillings, and costs of prosecution, and double that sum for the second offense; and for the third, or any after offense, shall be imprisoned, or publicly whipt, according to the judgment of the committee, before whom they are convicted; and in case any person, being convicted as aforesaid, shall refuse to pay the sum or sums, so forfeited and adjudged, he or they shall be committed to the common gaol, there to remain, not exceeding ten days, nor less than four, for said forfeiture, and until he pay all just costs.

"5th. Further, be it Resolved, that if any person, or persons, shall presume to purchase, or bring into this town, any teas, of what sort soever, until the minds of the Congress, respecting that article shall be fully known, shall, forthwith, deliver up such teas to one or more of the committee, to be stored by them and kept for the owner, until the minds of the Congress be known respecting that matter; and in case any person shall refuse to deliver up said teas, the committee have power to imprison him until he does.

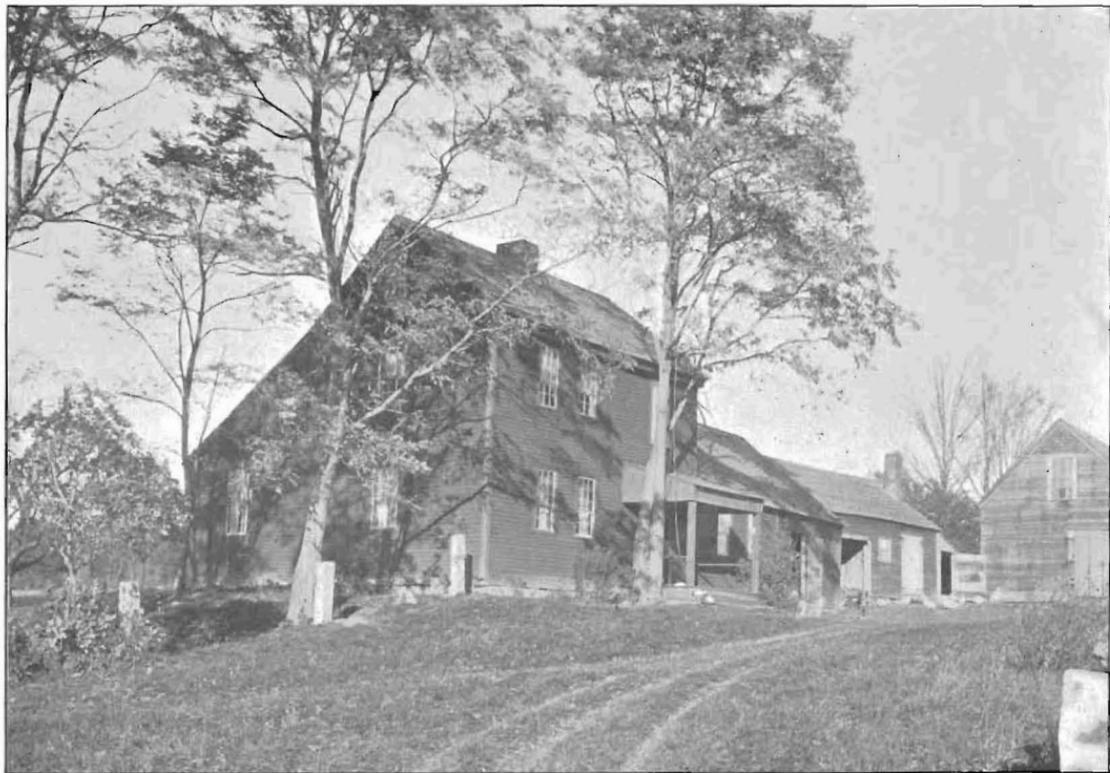
"6th. And for the better execution of all and every the foregoing articles, it is Resolved, that all and each of the said committee shall have full power and authority to bring before them any of the inhabitants of this town, or any person residing in said town, that shall offend in any of the foregoing resolves, and upon his or their own views, or other sufficient conviction of any such offense, to impose the fine and penalty for the same, and to commit the offender until it be satisfied.

"7th. It is likewise Resolved, that the officer appointed shall have power and authority to carry any person, that shall be found trespassing in any of the foregoing particulars, before said committee for trial, and if need be, may command aid and assistance in discharging his trust; and any person refusing to give aid or assistance, as aforesaid, he or they shall forfeit the sum of three shillings for every offence, and have their names inserted in the public Gazette, as unfriendly to good order.

"And all masters and heads of families, in this town, are hereby directed to take effectual care that their children, servants, and others under their immediate government, do no trespass, in any of the foregoing particulars.

"Chose Thomas Baker, Eliphalet Briggs, and Dan Guild, as a committee to judge, determine, and act upon said Resolves, and put them in execution, and chose Elijah Blake officer for the purpose mentioned in said Resolves."

(Annals, pages 42-44.)



LUTHER NURSE HOUSE. BUILT 1773.

"The town voted, 37. to 27, to give Mr. John Remele a call to settle as a minister. They offered him £133 6s. 8d. as a settlement, and 75 pounds as a salary. His reply was, 'that the town had offered generously enough for his support, but he could not think it his duty to settle in any place, where there was so much opposition.'

"It is well remembered that, in the year of the battle of Bunker Hill, Elisha Briggs projected, and Samuel Bassett and Aaron Willson, by the aid of a bee, excavated, the canal from the pond on West-street to a point on the river about a hundred rods below. The North end of the canal was a few rods North of the road, the pond not then extending as far South as now. By shortening the distance, a sufficient fall was obtained to carry a grist-mill and saw-mill. These mills¹ and the dam were built by Elisha Briggs. The grist mill was placed two or three rods North of the road as it now runs, and nearly North of the present grist-mill; the saw mill was placed where the factory now stands; and the dam where it now is. The mills were sold to Nathan Blake, and were, for some time, known as Blake's Mills. Briggs about this time, projected and surveyed the canal, conducting the waters of White Brook into Ash Swamp Brook."

(Annals, pages 44-45.)

Tradition states, no doubt correctly, that the barn—still standing—on the "Luther Nurse place" on Beech hill, was raised on the day that the battle of Bunker Hill was fought.

In August the provincial congress had recommended to "the Select Men of the several Towns, Parishes and other Places in this Colony, to take an exact Number of the Inhabitants of their respective Districts," in classes, with the number of firearms and pounds of powder on hand, and the number of firearms needed, and that an account of the whole, made under oath, "be returned to the Committee of Safety for this Colony."

A complete return was made and Keene presented the following:

"Province of New Hampshire Keene Oct^{br} 25 1775 in Complience to a Recommend from the Honorable Provincial Congress of August 25, 1775 We here Transmitt a True account of the Number of Souls, fire arms gun Powder &c in the town of Keen.

¹A piece of the old water-wheel put in by Elisha Briggs may still be seen at Faulkner & Colony's mills.

Males under 16 years of age.....	174
Males from 16 years to 50, not in the army....	140
All Males above 50 years of age.....	24
Persons in the army.....	31
All females.....	387
	756 ¹
fire arms.....	72
Gun Powder Privit Stock.....	22 lb
Guns wanting.....	92
Town Stock of Powder.....	90 lb
N. B. No Negroes nor Slaves ² for life	
Benja Osgood } Selectmen	
Tho ^s Baker } of Keene."	

¹Swansey returned 647; Walpole, 658; Winchester, 728; Westmoreland, 758; Richmond, 860; Chesterfield, 1,059; Concord, 1,052; Exeter, 1,741; Portsmouth, 4,590; and the colony of New Hampshire, 82,200.

²Portsmouth returned 140 slaves, Exeter 38, Somersworth 30, Londonderry 29, Dover 26, Greenland 21, Concord 14, Hanover 10, Peterboro 8, Walpole and Winchester 2 each, Dublin 1. In the colony there were upwards of 600, and in New England, 16,000.