

CHAPTER VIII.

REVOLUTIONARY WAR—CONTINUED.

1776-1777.

On the 5th of January, 1776, the Provincial congress took up the matter of establishing a temporary civil government for the colony, and "Resolved That this Congress Assume the Name, Power & Authority of a house of Representatives or Assembly for the Colony of New Hampshire." A council of twelve members was provided for, to be elected in the first instance by that house, afterwards by the people. Samuel Ashley of Winchester and Benjamin Giles of Newport were chosen for Cheshire county. In default of a governor, the two houses assumed the executive duties during the session, and invested the committee of safety with that power during the recess. Precepts for elections were to be issued in the name of the council and assembly, signed by the president of the council and the speaker of the house. Mesech Weare was chosen president of the council and chairman of the committee of safety, and thus became acting governor. He was also appointed chief justice of the superior court of judicature.

On the 12th of April that committee of safety sent to the selectmen of each town the "ASSOCIATION TEST," which is given in the Annals of Keene as follows:

To the Selectmen of Keene.

COLONY OF NEW HAMPSHIRE.
IN COMMITTEE OF SAFETY,

April 12th, 1776.

In order to carry the underwritten RESOLVE of the Hon'ble Congress into Execution, You are requested to desire all Males above Twenty-One Years of Age, (Lunaticks, Idiots, and Negroes excepted,) to sign to the DECLARATION on this paper; and when so done to make return hereof, together with the Name or Names of all who shall refuse to sign the same, to the GENERAL ASSEMBLY, or Committee of Safety of this Colony.

M. WEARE, *Chairman.*

IN CONGRESS, MARCH 14th, 1776.

Resolved, That it be recommended to the several Assemblies, Conventions and Councils, or Committees of Safety of the United Colonies, *immediately* to cause all persons to be *disarmed*, within their respective Colonies, who are *notoriously* disaffected to the cause of AMERICA, Or who have not associated, and refuse to associate, to defend by ARMS the United Colonies, against the Hostile Attempts of the British Fleets and Armies.

Extract from the Minutes,

(COPY.)

CHARLES THOMPSON, Sec'y.

In consequence of the above Resolution, of the Hon. Continental CONGRESS, and to show our Determination in joining our American Brethren, in defending the Lives, Liberties and Properties of the Inhabitants of the UNITED COLONIES:

We the *Subscribers*, do hereby solemnly engage, and promise, that we will, to the utmost of our Power, at the Risque of our Lives and Fortunes, with ARMS oppose the Hostile Proceedings of the British Fleets and Armies against the United American COLONIES.

Thomas Frink,
Nathan Blake,
Eliphalet Briggs, Jr.,
Josiah Richardson,
Joseph Blake,
Daniel Kingsbury,
Dan Guild,
Eli Metcalf,
Ichabod Fisher,
Thomas Wilder,
Timothy Ellis,
Gideon Tiffany,
Jesse Hall,
Michael Metcalf,
Jesse Clark,
Gideon Ellis, Jr.,
David Nims, Jr.,
Abraham Wheeler,
William Ellis,
Joshua Osgood,
Nathaniel Kingsbury,
Reuben Daniels,
Reuben Partridge,
Cephas Clark,
Ebenezer Carpenter,
Timothy Ellis, Jr.,
Eliakim Nims,
Caleb Ellis,
Joseph Willson,
Davis Howlett,
Timothy Ellis, ye 3d,
Benjamin Willis,

Isaac Wyman,
David Foster,
Ephraim Dorman,
Seth Heaton,
Andrew Balch,
Gideon Ellis,
Thomas Baker,
Benjamin Archer,
Joseph Ellis,
Simeon Washburn,
Zadoc Nims,
Isaac Clark,
Bartholomew Grimes,
David Willson,
Benjamin Balch,
Ebenezer Day,
John Dickson,
Naboth Bettison,
Abraham Wheeler, Jr.,
James Wright,
John Houghton,
Silas Cook,
Nathan Blake, Jr.,
Nathan Rugg,
Stephen Larrabee,
Robert Spencer,
Ebenezer Cook,
Joshua Ellis,
Jotham Metcalf,
Moses Marsh,
Simeon Clark, Jr.,
Benjamin Ellis,

David Nims,
Elisha Briggs,
Benjamin Archer, Jr.,
Samuel Wood,
Eliphalet Briggs,
Nathaniel Briggs,
Elijah Blake,
Uriah Willson,
John Le Bourveau,
David Foster, Jr.,
Aaron Gray, Jr.,
John Daniels,
Samuel Daniels,
Jedediah Carpenter,
William Goodenough,
Adin Holbrook,
Hezekiah Man,
Jeremiah Stiles,
Samuel Hall,
Jonathan Archer,
Abraham Pond,
Silas French,
Eliphalet Carpenter,
Benjamin Willard,
Jacob Town,
John Day,
Peter Rice,
Isaac Esty,
Jonathan Dwinell,
Thomas Dwinell,
John Connolly,
Abijah Wilder,

Samuel Chapman,
John Balch,
Abijah Metcalf,
Henry Ellis,
Luther Bragg,
Seth Heaton, Jr.,
Josiah Ellis,
Benjamin Osgood,
Ebenezer Newton,
Daniel Willson,
Ezra Harvey,
David Harris,
Obadiah Blake, Jr.,

Asabel Blake,
Samuel Bassett,
Jedediah Wellman,
Jonathan Heaton,
Simeon Ellis,
Benjamin Ellis,
James Crossfield,
Joseph Ellis, Jr.,
Thomas Baker, Jr.,
Thomas Wells,
Achilles Mansfield,
Royal Blake,
William Gray,

Zadoc Wheeler,
Daniel Snow,
William Nelson,
Israel Houghton,
William Woods,
Asaph Nichols,
Elisha Ellis,
Thomas Fields,
Michael Sprought,
Benjamin Tiffany,
James Eddy.

Agreeably to the within direction, we' have requested all in this Town to sign, as herein set forth; and hereto annexed the names of all those who Refuse to sign the within Declaration, viz :

Maj. Josiah Willard,
Lt. Benjamin Hall,
Dr. Josiah Pomeroy,
Samuel Wadsworth,
Robert Gilman,

John White,
Eleazer Sanger,
Abner Sanger,
Thomas Cutter,
James Perkins,

Benjamin Osgood, Jr.'
John Swan,
James Hunt.

ELIPHALET BRIGGS, JR.,
JOSIAH RICHARDSON,
JOSEPH BLAKE,
DANIEL KINGSBURY,

} *Selectmen
of the Town of
Keene.*

Only 773 persons in the colony, then numbering 80,000 inhabitants, refused to sign; but in most cases those were the wealthy and influential men.

The legislature called upon the towns for recommendations of persons for justices of the peace. On the 23d of April, Keene voted unanimously to recommend Col. Isaac Wyman, and he was appointed on the 11th of June.

In the spring and summer of 1775, the Indians had threatened the Connecticut valley, and Capt. Timothy Bedel of Bath had been authorized to raise a company of rangers for its protection. The company was afterwards increased to a battalion and later to a regiment. Bedel was appointed colonel, with orders to join the northern army. In February, John Griggs, as second lieutenant, and Elisha Willis, Benjamin Hall and Joseph Gray as privates, all from Stiles' disbanded company, and William Hardwick, also of Keene, enlisted in the company of Capt. Jason Wait of Alstead, in Bedel's regiment.

Early in March, Washington seized Dorchester Heights

and compelled the British to evacuate Boston. They left the city on the 17th, and on the 18th, Washington "started five of his best regiments," of which Stark's was one, on their march to New York. On the 27th, Sullivan followed with the remainder of his brigade; and soon after his arrival was sent, with all his New Hampshire regiments and some others, to reinforce the army of the North, which was slowly retreating from Quebec. Small pox had broken out in that army and it was suffering terribly from that disease. A part of Bedel's regiment was captured at a place called "The Cedars." Upon the death of Gen. Thomas, from small pox, the command of that army devolved upon Gen. Sullivan. He continued to retire slowly upon Crown Point and Ticonderoga. The British army that opposed him was increased, and the approach of so large a force caused great alarm throughout New England, particularly as bands of Indians now hovered on our frontiers and threatened to renew their barbarous atrocities.

Warnings and appeals for protection poured in upon the legislature. Upon a requisition of the Continental congress the New Hampshire legislature, on the 14th of June, resolved: "That there be forthwith raised and equipped in this Colony a Regiment of seven hundred and fifty men including officers—and that each non-commissioned officer and soldier receive a bounty of Six Pounds" —afterward changed to \$20 and one month's advance pay. On the 20th, Col. Isaac Wyman of Keene was appointed to the command of that regiment. It consisted of nine companies, was destined for service in the northern army, and its rendezvous was Haverhill, on the Connecticut river. Joseph Senter of Moultonborough was appointed lieutenant colonel; Stephen Peabody of Amherst, major; Dr. Calvin Frink of Swanzey, son-in-law of Col. Wyman, surgeon; and Isaac Temple of Alstead, adjutant.

Col. Wyman's captains were:

- | | |
|-----------------------------------|--------------------------------|
| 1. William Harper of Brentwood. | 6. Joseph Dearborn, Chester. |
| 2. William Stilson, Hopkinton. | 7. Joseph Chandler, Epping. |
| 3. James Shepard, Canterbury. | 8. Joseph Parker, New Ipswich. |
| 4. John Drew, Barrington. | 9. William Barron, Merrimack. |
| 5. Samuel Wetherbee, Charlestown. | |

John Kilburn, of Gilsum, was first lieutenant and Davis Howlett, of Keene, second lieutenant under Capt. Wetherbee; and sixteen men from Keene enlisted with Lieutenant Howlett in that company, namely, Sergeants Ebenezer Carpenter and Isaac Griswold; Corporal Robert Worsley; and Privates William Stanwood, Aaron Willson, Isaac Clark, John Swan, John (P.) Blake, Thomas Wilder, James Hall, Jesse Wheeler, Samuel Osgood, Joshua Ellis, Eliakim Nims, Joseph Thatcher¹ and Jonathan Heaton.¹

On the 11th of July, the committee of safety sent Col. Wyman his commission and urged him to push forward to Crown Point with as little delay as possible. That Col. Wyman was held in high esteem is evident from the fact that he was the choice of the legislature in preference to several other strong candidates who were urged for the place.

Some of the men were transferred from the service on the New Hampshire coast, in which they had previously enlisted. Capt. Barron moved his company from Merrimack, July 22, to Millikin's tavern in Wilton, where recruits joined him, and the next day they marched to Dublin. On the 25th, they marched through Keene to Walpole, and on the 26th reached No. 4, where they met other companies of the regiment, and other troops from Massachusetts moving to the front. William Hardwick of Keene was a member of Capt. Barron's company.

Col. Wyman collected his regiment at Charlestown and marched thence with his nine companies, on the 1st of August, to join the army at Crown Point, following the road made in the last French and Indian war, and encamping that night at Springfield, Vt. On the 6th they reached Skeensboro (Whitehall), where the regiment was stationed for a time, to avoid the contagion of small pox with which the northern army was still sorely afflicted. Dysentery and "putrid fever" had also broken out among those troops, and "it was computed, that of the (three veteran) New Hampshire regiments, nearly one-third part died this year from sickness." (Belknap's History of New Hampshire,

¹ Heaton is on the roll as from Surry, but he belonged to the militia company here in 1773, and signed the "Association Test" in 1776 as a citizen of Keene. Thatcher appears to have been transferred from Wingate's regiment to Wyman's.

vol. 2, page 410.) Among them was young Joseph Gray of Keene. Thomas Wilder of Wetherbee's company, Wyman's regiment, died of small pox before the recruits left Keene. Col. James Reed suffered so severely from sickness that he became totally blind and was compelled to retire from the service at the close of that year. He was a brave and capable officer and congress promoted him to be brigadier general. Being loath to quit the service he remained with his troops through the summer and autumn, and commanded a brigade for a short time at Ticonderoga.¹ Major Alexander Scammel, promoted to colonel, succeeded to the command of his regiment, with Andrew Colburn, of Marlboro, lieutenant colonel, and Capt. Henry Dearborn promoted to major.

On the 9th of August, Col. Wyman left Skeensboro with his regiment to "Joyn Gen. Reed's Brigade" at Ticonderoga, and was stationed at Fort Independence.

The fear of an Indian raid increased now that our army had withdrawn from Canada, and the people of Keene and all through the Connecticut valley were in a state of alarm lest the frightful scenes of former years should be repeated. Gen. Sullivan, before he was superseded by Gen. Gates, had sent Col. Wait with 200 men to Onion river to protect our frontier; and the legislature authorized the raising of three companies of fifty men each from the western part of the colony for the same purpose.

On the 3d of July the legislature had voted to raise 1,500 men to reinforce the northern army, and apportioned the quotas to be furnished by each militia regiment in the colony, that of Col. Ashley's being 100 men. From those recruits a regiment of eight companies was organized in July and August and sent forward to Ticonderoga, to serve five months. Joshua Wingate of Stratham was appointed colonel, and the rendezvous was at Charlestown. In Capt. Humphrey's company of that regiment were Benjamin Ellis, sergeant, and Naboth Bettison, Daniel Willson, Henry Ellis, Abraham Griffin and Joseph Thatcher, privates, all of Keene. Thatcher appears to have been transferred to Wyman's regiment.

¹Lieut. Burton's Diary.

On the 4th of July the Declaration of Independence was signed and "Within fourteen days it was published by beat of drums in all the shire towns of New Hampshire." (Belknap's History of New Hampshire, vol. 2, page 405.) It was received by the army, the legislatures and the people with great rejoicing. That declaration brought great encouragement to the patriots, gave them a more definite object for carrying on the war, and united them in a common cause. That object had now come to be the establishment of a nation of their own under democratic rule; the dreaded alternative was the fate of conquered rebels. There could be no more powerful incentive to fight; no sharper spur to endure hardship and privation.

When the news of the signing of the Declaration reached Keene, steps were at once taken to celebrate the occasion; and the following story in connection is told by Col. Rush C. Hawkins of New York in his biographical sketch of Rev. Aaron Hutchinson, a very learned and accomplished divine of that period. Mr. Hutchinson had preached in both Grafton, Mass., and Pomfret, Vt., and while on a journey from the former to the latter place, "when the family arrived at Keene, the citizens of that town had just heard of the signing of the Declaration of Independence at Philadelphia and were assembled in an open lot (doubtless on the 'Green') for a celebration of that patriotic event. They had erected a liberty pole for which a flag had been provided, but as they had no halyards there was no way of fastening it to the top of the pole except by climbing, and a Spanish silver piece then in use, of the present value of twenty-five cents, was offered to any one brave enough to undertake the perilous act. Greatly to the surprise of those assembled, a little stripling of a boy, only nine years old, came forward and said he would like to try. At first no one was willing to allow such a puny specimen of a child to run the risk he proposed, but upon the assurance of Mr. Hutchinson that his 'little Alec' was a cool-headed boy and could be trusted, he was allowed to make the attempt to carry the flag as near the top as possible. He succeeded in taking it to a point where the pole was so slender that it bent under his weight, but the courage and

coolness of the boy averted a pending danger and crowned his bold effort with success. He descended amid the plaudits of the multitude and received the promised compensation."

A town meeting on the 2d of August chose Capt. Eliphallet Briggs, of the committee of safety of Keene, a delegate to a convention of the committees of safety in the county to be held at Walpole on the 6th, "To Consult and agree upon such Methods as shall then be thought Necessary for the General Good and Our Mutual Defence and Safety."

The legislature had adjourned from the 6th of July to the 4th of September. On the 10th, the Declaration of Independence, which had been received during the recess, was read in the house, and the following resolution was immediately passed:

"Voted and Resolved, That this Colony Assume and take upon themselves the NAME & STILE of NEW HAMPSHIRE, and that all Communications, Writs, Processes & all Law Proceedings which heretofore were made & issued in the Name & Stile of the Province of New Hampshire, or the Name & Stile of the Colony of New Hampshire, shall henceforth be made & issued in the Name & Stile of the STATE of NEW HAMPSHIRE, and not otherwise." And the council concurred.

On the 14th a convention of both houses voted to raise 1,000 men to reinforce the army at New York under Washington, to be divided into two regiments of eight companies each. The colonelcy of one of those regiments was given to Thomas Tash of Durham, that of the other to "Dea." Nahum Baldwin of Amherst. The men were enlisted for three months and were paid a bounty of \$20. The two regiments were promptly raised and marched via Hartford, New Haven, and Stamford, Ct. Baldwin's regiment joined the main army and took part in the battle of White Plains, Oct. 28. Capt. John Houghton, of Keene, commanded the 6th company in that regiment, and the enlisted men from Keene were Samuel Bassett, Caleb Ellis, John Lebourveau, Obadiah Blake, Jr., James Eddy, Samuel Hall, John Dickson and Ziba Hall. The regiment was mustered out early in December.

The alarm for the safety of Ticonderoga continued, and

in October, Cols. Ashley and Bellows marched from Cheshire county to reinforce Gen. Gates, each with six companies of his regiment of militia. Col. Chase, of Cornish, also marched with two companies of his regiment, and Col. Enoch Hale of Rindge sent two of his companies, under Lt. Col. Thomas Heald. The men from Keene in that campaign were Stephen Griswold,¹ lieutenant, and Thomas Morse, private, in the company of Capt. Isaac Davis; Michael Metcalf, lieutenant, Timothy Ellis, Jr., sergeant, David Wilson, corporal, and Cephas Clark, John Balch, Jacob Town, Michael Sprout,² Aaron Gray, Silas French, Thomas Field, Adin Holbrook, Reuben Partridge, Robert Spencer, Abraham Wheeler, and Jonathan Wheeler, privates in the company of Capt. Joseph Whitcomb of Swanzey; and Ephraim Witherell and Daniel Snow, Jr., in the company of Capt. Joseph Burt; all in Col. Ashley's regiment.

No record of the particular movements of those troops has been found, but at the close of the campaign the following letter of thanks was received from Gen. Gates:

"Ticonderoga Nov. 9th 1776.

"GENTLEMEN—I return you, and the officers & soldiers of the Regiments under your command, my sincere thanks for the Spirit and Expedition both you & they have shewn in marching upon the first alarm, upwards of one hundred & fifty miles, to the support of this important pass, when threatened with an immediate attack from the Enemy's Army. I now dismiss you with the Honour you have so well deserved. I further Certify, that neither you nor any under your command, have received any pay or reward from me for your services upon this occasion; that I leave to be settled by the General Congress with the Convention of your State. With great respect,

"I am, Gentlemen your most obed^t

Hum^{bl} Serv^t
Horatio Gates.

"To Colonel Ashley & Colonel Bellows commanding the Regiments of Militia from the County of Cheshire, in the State of New Hampshire."

In September, congress voted to raise eighty-eight battalions of troops, by enlistments and reënlistments, to serve

¹ Stephen Griswold's name appears on the records for a long term of years as a citizen of Keene—moderator of town meetings, and holding other town offices. He was at one time a selectman of Gilsnum.

² Michael Sprout belonged in Packersfield, but enlisted from Keene.

through the war. New Hampshire's quota was three battalions. The government offered a bounty of \$20 in money and a grant of 100 acres of land to each enlisted man; with an increase in land to officers according to rank, a captain to receive 300 acres, a colonel 500. The three New Hampshire regiments of Stark, Poor and Reed (now Scammel) were reorganized, many of the officers and men re-enlisted, and recruiting offices were soon afterward opened to complete their numbers.

The legislature met in November, and voted to raise another reinforcement of 1,000 men for Washington's army, 500 men to be drafted at once from the militia regiments, organized into a regiment of eight companies under Col. David Gilman, of Pembroke, and sent forward immediately. In that legislature, Major Timothy Ellis of Keene served on several important committees, and when he returned home he brought a large sum of money to the recruiting officers in this part of the state. Capt. Francis Towne, of Rindge; with Samuel Wright of Swanzey, first lieutenant, raised a company of Cheshire county men. Zadock Wheeler, of Keene, was a sergeant and Samuel Heaton, of Keene, a corporal in that company. The regiment was mustered Dec. 5, went immediately to the front, was in the battles of Trenton and Princeton and remained in the service beyond its term—with the other New Hampshire regiments, all re-enlisting for six weeks, at the earnest solicitation of Washington—until the 12th of March.

Early in December another alarm spread through New England in consequence of the appearance of the British fleet off the coast, apparently with the intention of landing troops. On the 10th, the legislature "Voted, That Gen. Folsom be and hereby is Directed to order all the militia of this State instantly to prepare themselves with all necessary warlike accoutrements & six days Provisions—as an order for their marching may follow this in Twenty-four hours." But marching orders did not come at that time.

The army at this period was in a deplorable condition, and the outlook of public affairs was so gloomy that congress recommended all the states to appoint a "Day of

Solemn Fasting and Humiliation." The New Hampshire legislature adopted the recommendation, and on the 13th of December "dissolved," with the invocation, "God save the United States of America."

The three New Hampshire regiments of Stark, Poor and Scammell had left the northern army on the 16th of November, marched down the Hudson river, crossed the country through New Jersey and Pennsylvania, and joined Washington on the 20th of December, in time to take a leading part in the battles of Trenton and Princeton. Though worn with fatigue and almost destitute of clothing in that inclement season, they were counted by Washington among the best troops of his army, and their arrival gave him great satisfaction. At Trenton the main column of attack was commanded by Sullivan, and led by Stark with his New Hampshire men; and, according to Gen. Sullivan's account of the battle, the same New Hampshire regiments, with Gilman's added, saved the day at Princeton. Wingate's regiment left the northern army for home on the 20th of November; and Wyman's on the 22d, via Rutland and Cavendish, and were discharged on the 1st of December.

Early in 1776, Mr. Ebenezer Day, who lived at the north part of the town, died, at the age of 66, and was the first to be buried in the north burying-ground, the land for which had been given by Capt. John Houghton—who lived on the west side of the river—from off his farm, deeded to him by his father, Israel Houghton.

During the year the small pox had prevailed, not only in the army but in many of the towns and settlements. There had been cases of it in this town in the previous year, and private hospitals had been established by some of the resident physicians. Inoculation was just then coming into practice, but the physicians, without experience, were not always successful in its use, and the people were generally opposed to it. This year the disease became epidemic, largely in consequence, as was believed, of the improper management of those hospitals. The same conditions existed in other towns, particularly at Charlestown, the rendezvous of the troops enlisted for the army; and

Ruins of Dwinnell's Mill, West Keene. Built in 1776. Later known as Willson's Mill.



RUINS OF DWINNELL'S MILL, WEST KEENE. BUILT IN 1776. LATER KNOWN AS WILLSON'S MILL.

complaints came from those connected with that service of the inoculations at Keene. A town meeting was held on the 27th of September to consider the subject. Capt. Eliphalet Briggs was chosen moderator, and resolutions were passed and strict regulations adopted for the government of the hospitals in town.

In November, the following petition was sent to the legislature:

“To the Honorable Council and House of Representatives of the State of New Hampshire. The petition of us the Subscribers Freeholders of the Town of Keen in the County of Cheshire Humbly Sheweth—

“Whereas Sundry Persons have Set up houses in this Town for the purpose of Inoculating for the Small pox, by which Means the Small pox has been Spread and Still Continues to spread in this and other Towns, to the Great Determent of the publick Good—and a Number of Useful members of Society have lost their Lives thereby and the prosecution of mens Necessary Callings Rendered Dangerous—and the Repeated Endeavour of the Towns to lay Persons Concer’d under proper Restrictions and Regulations—have been ineffectual We therefore your Petitioners humbly Pray that you would in Your wisdom So Interpose by Your Authority that a Speedy and an Effectual Stop may be put thereto for the present—as Your Petitioners in Duty Bound Shall Ever pray.

“Keene Novem^r 22^d 1776.

“Jer ^h Stiles	W ^m Ellis
Isaac Esty	Aaron Gray
Ebenezer Nims	Aaron Gray Jun ^r
Reuben Partridge	Jesse Hall
Gideon Ellis Jun ^r	Ebenezer Newton
Robart Spencer	Abijah Metcalf
Jonathan Pond	Ryal Blake
Ebenezer Day	Henry Elles
John Day	Josiah Ellis
Jedediah Wellman	Timothy Ellis Jun ^r
Stephen Larrabe	Elisha Briggs
Nathaniel Kingsbury	Nathaniel Briggs
Benj Archer Jun.	Benj ^a Balch
Jesse Clark	Cephas Clark
Thomas Field	John Balch
William Goodenow	Jonathan Archer
Joseph Blake	Abner Ralston.”

Before the close of the year several citizens died of that disease, among them Capt. Eliphalet Briggs, who had

presided at the September meeting. He "was buried at the foot of the hill, on the road leading to Roxbury." Thomas Frink, Josiah Pomeroy, Gideon Tiffany and Obadiah Blake were the physicians in town at that time. Dr. Pomeroy had one of the hospitals complained of, and Dr. Tiffany another, on the east side of the town. The following spring, a pest house was built "at a secluded spot near the South end of Beech Hill, since known as pock pasture, for the inoculation of the small pox. A Doctor Pomeroy was the attending physician. He lived in the house afterwards occupied by General Reed, of revolutionary memory, which stood on the West side of Main street, nearly opposite but below the site of the fort. A large number were inoculated, of whom six died." (Annals, page 51.)

The residence of Dr. Pomeroy, the tory, afterwards confiscated by the state and leased to Gen. Reed, was on lots Nos. 44 and 45, next north of Col. Wyman's tavern, bought of Rev. Clement Sumner in 1773. Later the place came into possession of Daniel Newcomb, administrator of the estate of Dr. Pomeroy, appointed by the judge of probate, same as in case of decease.

The September meeting elected Major Timothy Ellis representative to the legislature for one year, and chose Capt. Jeremiah Stiles, Silas Cooke, Thomas Baker, Capt. John Houghton and Daniel Kingsbury a "committee to prepare Instructions in Behalf of the Town to give the Representative."

In December, Capt. Jeremiah Stiles was chosen a member of the committee of safety of the town, in place of Capt. Eliphalet Briggs, deceased.

Very little had been accomplished in the town during the year, for public affairs and the carrying on of the war had absorbed the attention of everybody, and all efforts had been turned in that direction. The baneful effects of the war on the prosperity of the people were now seriously felt. The attempt to relieve the situation by issuing paper money—made by both the Continental congress and the state legislature—was a lamentable failure. Lack of faith in its stability caused continual depreciation of its value;

or, in other words, the prices of commodities in that paper money increased enormously. The legislature attempted to control the laws of trade by fixing the prices of commodities, but the result was simply another illustration of the futility of all such legislation. Scarcely any goods were imported, and few were manufactured, except such as could be made by the people themselves in their log cabins from the products of their farms. The scarcity of firearms induced the people of Cheshire county to make a strong effort and to choose a committee to "Set up and Carry on the Manufactory of Fire Arms" within the county; but the scarcity of money prevented the success of the undertaking. Capt. Ephraim Dorman, Thomas Wells, Elijah Blake, Benjamin Archer, Eliphalet Briggs, Capt. Josiah Richardson, Capt. John Houghton, Thomas Baker, Lieut. Benjamin Hall, Israel Houghton, Daniel Kingsbury, and several other citizens of Keene, signed the petition of Joel Kilburn of Gilsum to the legislature for aid and encouragement in establishing the manufacture of wire, of which there was scarcely any to be had. There were few mechanics, and it was almost impossible to procure suitable tools and implements, or to have existing ones repaired; and the work of the farm and the family had to be done with the rudest utensils and contrivances. So many of the men were in the army that it was with extreme difficulty that crops could be raised and gathered. Those were indeed "hard times."

On the 14th of January, 1777, the town voted twenty pounds for the support of preaching and sixteen pounds for ammunition. The number of the committee of safety was increased to seven and Capt. Jeremiah Stiles, Jesse Clark, Ebenezer Cook, Capt. John Houghton, Reuben Partridge, Simeon Clark and Peter Hobart were chosen for that committee. Capt. Stiles was nominated by vote of the town for justice of the peace. His appointment was delayed, but was finally made upon a petition of several citizens of the town.

Most of the troops having been withdrawn from Ticonderoga, and Lake Champlain being frozen over, there was great alarm lest the British, who lay at St. Johns,

should advance on the ice and capture that fortress; and troops were hastened forward for its protection. In February, Col. Pierce Lang's regiment marched from Newcastle through Keene and Charlestown towards that destination. More soldiers were needed, particularly for the Continental service, but the hardships and privations of the people were intensified in the case of the soldiers in the field, and it was hard to induce men to enlist for the long term of three years or the war, as required in the Continental service. The legislature offered a bounty of twenty pounds to each man who would enlist in that service, in addition to the large bounties in land and money offered by congress—to be paid four years after enlistment, with interest. The militia laws were made more effective for raising troops, provision was made for drafting in case volunteering failed, and heavy penalties were laid on those who refused or neglected to serve after enrollment. The colonels of the New Hampshire regiments were at home that winter recruiting and forwarding the men to the rendezvous at Charlestown.

In January, Lieut. John Gregg (or Griggs), of Keene, was appointed captain of the Third company of Soammel's regiment, with Ebenezer Fletcher of Chesterfield—soon succeeded by William Ellis of Keene—first lieutenant, and Benjamin Ellis, of Keene, second lieutenant. Capt. Gregg had 300 pounds, sterling money, sent him by the state committee of safety for recruiting purposes, and he opened an office here and proceeded to raise a company. On the 2d of May, however, he resigned on account of sickness, and William Ellis was promoted to captain, with Benjamin Ellis first lieutenant. While waiting for the acceptance of his resignation Capt. Gregg sent out the following advertisement:

“Deserted from Cap^t John Griggs Company in Cor^l Scammills Rig^t Epraim Hall 24 years of age Six feet high Dark hair Blew Eyes Light Colored Cloths formerly belonged to Lyn: Whosoever will take up S^d Deserter and Return him to his Company at Keen or N^o 4: in the State of New Hampshire shall have a harnsom Reward and all Nesesary Charges Paid by me

Keene May y^c 5th 1777.”

John Griggs Cap^t

He also advertised for one Nathan Gale, "21 yers of age 6 feet Hi Well Set Dark hair."

Col. Scammel himself came to Keene in May to superintend the recruiting, as will be seen by the following extract from a letter to the committee of safety:

"Keen, May 9th 1777.

"GENTLEMEN—The backwardness of the men to engage in this Quarter & the fewness of men in Capt. Ellis's Company render it necessary that a full complement of Officers should be immediately employ'd in filling it. Many of the towns in the vicinity of this place have rais'd but very few men, * * * *

"As many of my Officers are not commissioned should esteem it a particular favor to have them forwarded to Ticonderoga as soon as conveniency permit. * * * *

"I am, with the greatest respect, y^r Honors most obedt & very humble Serv^t.
Alex^r Scammell."

The Keene men who enlisted in Capt. Ellis's company were Naboth Bettison, James Eddy, Daniel Snow, Jr., John Balch, Jr., Ziba Hall, Benjamin Thatcher, William Farley,¹ Nathaniel Briggs, Timothy Crossfield, and John Daniels.² All enlisted for three years except Daniels, who joined for eight months. Ezra Turner of Keene enlisted in Capt. Hutchin's company, Cilley's regiment, and Reuben Colster of Keene, in the company of Capt. Elijah Clayes of Fitzwilliam, in Col. Nathan Hale's regiment.

The annual town meeting this year chose Capt. Jeremiah Stiles, Capt. John Houghton, Simeon Clark, Jesse Clark and Ebenezer Cooke committee of safety. Ten pounds were voted for preaching and a Mr. Mansfield and a Mr. Samuel Whitman preached as candidates. The article in relation to granting money for schools was dismissed. The town having been called upon for its quota of men for the Continental army, to serve three years or during the war, on the 31st of March, it voted a bounty of thirty pounds to each man provided "a Sufficient Number would Turn out, but as not any offered the meeting was dismissed." In June following, however, the same bounty was offered, in addition to that voted by the state, and a committee was

¹ Farley belonged in Packersfield, but enlisted as from Keene.

² Daniels is on the roll as from Chesterfield, but was a citizen of Keene, a member of the company here in 1773, and signed the Association Test in 1776.

appointed to adjust the time and pay of those who had previously enlisted.

Pressing appeals continued to come from Gen. Schuyler, Gen. Wayne and others to hasten forward troops to save Ticonderoga. On the 3d of May, the state committee of safety sent orders to each of the three colonels of militia in Cheshire county, "to raise as many of your Militia as possible and march them to Ticonderoga." Col. Ashley marched from Keene on the 7th, from Westmoreland on the 8th, with 109 men; Col. Bellows marched on the same day with 112; Col. Chase of Cornish with 159; and Capt. Brown with fifty-four men from Col. Enoch Hale's regiment. Timothy Ellis of Keene was major of Ashley's regiment and marched with the troops. Capt. Davis Howlett of Keene commanded the first company, of fifty men, with Elisha Mack of Gilsum, lieutenant, and the enlisted men from Keene in that company were Jotham Metcalf, sergeant; David Willson and Obadiah Blake, corporals; and Benjamin Archer, Samuel Bassett, Simeon Clark, Jesse Dassance, Ebenezer Day, Simeon Ellis, David Foster, Silas French and Tilly Howe, privates. Ephraim Witherell was in the company of Capt. Waitstill Scott in the same regiment. The regiment marched to Ticonderoga, but the alarm had subsided and it returned, and the men were discharged, June 17th to the 24th.

Gen. Burgoyne now commanded the British army of the north, 10,000 strong—7,000 of them "choice troops sent from England, with the finest train of brass artillery (42 pieces), that had ever been seen in America"¹—besides thousands of Indians employed as allies "to use as instruments of terror."¹ Exaggerated reports of the strength of his army and the rapidity of his advance reached the states and caused great alarm throughout New England, for it was feared that these eastern states were to be invaded by an irresistible force of regular troops and savages.

Again the militia was ordered to the front, and turned out in larger numbers than before. Col. Ashley marched on the 29th of June, with about 400 men, taking Lt. Col. Joseph Hammond, of Swanzey, with him, and leaving Major

¹ Bancroft's History of the United States, vol. 5, pages 579 and 587.

Ellis in command of the regiment at home. Dr. Thomas Frink of Keene went as regimental surgeon, and was allowed two horses to carry his baggage and medicines. Capt. Davis Howlett, with Daniel Kingsbury as his second lieutenant, raised another company of eighty men. The enlisted men from Keene were Asahel Blake and Dan Guild, sergeants, Timothy Ellis, Jr., corporal, and Nathan Blake, Robert Spencer, Jonathan Heaton, Tilly Howe, Benjamin Nurse, Aaron Wilson, Samuel Osgood, Royal Blake,¹ Jesse Hall, Ebenezer Carpenter, Joseph Thatcher, Zadock Nims, Abraham Wheeler, Jonathan Wheeler, Ebenezer Newton, Benjamin Balch, Aaron Gray, Thomas Dwinnell, Joseph Blake, Samuel Woods, Gideon Ellis, John Daniels, Nathaniel Kingsbury, John Day, Reuben Partridge, William Woods, Isaac Griswold, John Le Bourveau, John Balch, Benjamin Archer, and Israel Houghton, privates; and in the company of Capt. Elisha Mack, of Gilsum, were Charles Rice, Thomas Morse and Joseph Ellis; and Ephraim Witherell was in that of Capt. John Cole, of Westmoreland.

The Keene company marched a part of the distance, was met by an express with the information that the alarm was false and started to return, but was overtaken by a second courier ordering the troops forward in all haste. They marched as far as Otter creek, where they met a part of the army in retreat—Ticonderoga having been abandoned—and returned home. Other companies had similar experiences. Burgoyne was steadily advancing, and during those last days of June and first of July, battalions, companies and squads of troops were marching and countermarching to and from the front in all parts of the state. But the military road opened by Lt. Col. John Hawks and Col. John Goffe from Merrimack, N. H., through Peterboro, Keene and Charlestown to Crown Point, made this route through Keene the main line of the movements.

Two companies from Amherst and Wilton, under Major

¹He was usually called Rial, and is on the roll as Ariel Blake. Royal Blake was in the service and was one of those whose pay was equalized by the town in 1788; but "Ariel" is the only form in which his name appears on the Revolutionary rolls.

Abiel Abbott, passed through Keene and marched as far as No. 4, when they were ordered home. At Dublin, they were overtaken by an express and ordered to march "with all speed for Ticonderoga." This time they marched as far as Otter creek, where they heard of the evacuation and returned home. This made four times that those companies passed and repassed through Keene. A battalion of several companies and parts of companies under Lt. Col. Heald of New Ipswich, and companies and detachments from Hollis, Peterboro, Merrimack, Dunstable, Hudson, Derry, Bedford, Litchfield, Nottingham, Marlboro, Stoddard, and other towns, passed through Keene in a similar way at different times, marching both ways, at all hours of the day and night. One was a company of sixty-four men from Fitzwilliam and adjoining towns, under Capt. John Mellen. A company of forty-eight men from New Ipswich, under Capt. Josiah Brown, had horses enough to "ride and tie," and thus hastened their march. For weeks at this time, "Keene Street," as it was called then and for more than half a century afterwards, resounded with the continual tramp of marching patriots and the rub-dub-dub of the recruiting officer's drum.

The three New Hampshire regiments of Continental troops—Cilley's, Hale's and Scammel's—in Gen. Poor's brigade, had again joined the northern army. They had been armed with the French "fusil," the best musket then in use. But Gen. St. Clair abandoned his stores and the fortresses at the head of Lake Champlain, and retreated to Fort Edward, by the way of Hubbardston, Castleton and Rutland. At Hubbardston, disaster befell the New Hampshire troops by being overtaken by the energetic Gen. Frazer. They lost heavily in killed, wounded and prisoners; and among those captured was Col. Nathan Hale of Rindge. Lt. Col. George Reid,¹ of Londonderry, of Cilley's regiment, was transferred and given the command of Hale's regiment. Our northern army was in a deplorable condition; many of the soldiers left without permission, and when the volunteers for the support of that army met the straggling

¹ A daughter of Lieutenant Colonel, afterwards Colonel, and General Reid of the militia, became the wife of one governor of New Hampshire and the mother of another—Samuel Dinsmoor, senior, and Samuel Dinsmoor, junior, of Keene.

and demoralized troops, they turned back disappointed and disheartened, and some of them disbanded and returned singly to their homes. The imminent danger of invasion by the British and Indians caused increased alarm throughout this part of the country. Parties of New York tories and bands of Indians were already overrunning the New Hampshire Grants (Vermont), west of the mountains, outraging the inhabitants, destroying their property and driving off their cattle and horses, and many of the settlers abandoned their farms and fled.

In the midst of all this excitement, another source of anxiety to the people of this vicinity was disclosed in the increased activity, more or less hidden, of the tories in this and other towns. The following record appears in the State Papers, but is not found in the court records of this county:

“Return of the names of the Persons found guilty of misdemenors against the States by a Special Session held at Keen June 1777 as p^r minutes on file with the sum fin^d & order thereon

Col. Josiah Willard	20 ^s	John Gould	40 ^s
Maj ^r Josiah Willard	30 ^s	Alexander Rolstone	40 ^s
Eleazur Pomeroy	20 ^s	Paul Richardson	40 ^s
Eben ^r Harvey	40 ^s	Nathan Rugg	40 ^s
Rev. Micah Lawrence	20 ^s	Rev ^d Clement Sumner	40 ^s
Benj Melvin	40 ^s	Capt Henry Coffin	20 ^s
Benj. Melvin Jr.	40 ^s	Sam ^l King	40 ^s
Nathan Willard	10 ^s	John White	40 ^s
Joseph Collins	20 ^s	Simon Willard	10 ^s
Sam ^l Wadsworth	40 ^s		

Total £29—10—0.”

“Ordered that the several Persons fin^d for Misdemeno, Recognize in the sum of £500 as Principal with Two Surties to be of a Peacable Behavior towards the State & to be confin^d within certain Limits untill this Court or Sum other Authority shall Discharge them therefrom—

“order^d that Cap^t Benj^a Flood Receive £12 out of the fine money to Billit his guard with he to acct therefor—

“order^d that the Remainder of the fines be Repositied in the hands of Nath^l S. Prentice Esq. to wait the County Sessions order thereon

“a Ccopy from the minutes on file

Nath^l S. Prentice Clerk of s^d Sessions.”

At a special session of the court held at Keene, on the 3d

day of June the following persons, who had previously been indicted, were tried: Elijah King of Charlestown; Elijah Willard, Prentice Willard and Capt. Samuel Smith of Winchester; Simon Baxter of Alstead; Abner Sanger of Keene; and Josiah Butler. King and Prentice Willard were put under bonds of 500 pounds each for their good behavior; and Smith, Sanger, Baxter and Elijah Willard were locked up in jail at Charlestown.

On the 17th, the legislature, upon the report of a committee previously appointed to investigate a complaint against Breed Batchelder of Packersfield, and Robert Gilmore of Keene, "Voted that the said Batchelder and Gilmore be committed to close Prison in some Gaol in this state;" and they were arrested and locked up in the jail here. Other tories in the county were arrested from time to time, and tried before Justice Wyman and others. Some gave bonds, and some were imprisoned, though most of them were allowed freedom within certain limits. The property of the more obnoxious ones was afterwards confiscated for the benefit of the state. "Mrs. Sturtevant, who is the widow of Cornelius Sturtevant, Jr., the printer, was born in 1770, and is now living with mental faculties bright and vigorous, well remembers that, in early girlhood, when going to school from West-street to the school-house just South of the old Ralston house, she passed the old jail, standing near where the Emerald House now stands. It was made of hewn logs, with a small hole for a window. She and her companions often stopped to hear a Mr. Baxter; who was confined there, sing the 'Vicar of Bray.' This Baxter was a tory, lived in Surry or Alstead, and was probably then confined for toryism. Tradition speaks of him as wealthy for the time, bold, reckless, fond of enjoyment, and of defying public opinion. He doubtless sang the 'Vicar of Bray' to reproach and provoke the rebels outside for having deserted their King and sworn allegiance to the new government. He emigrated to Nova Scotia." (Annals, page 50.)

Yet, notwithstanding the alarming outlook and all their discouragements, the people as a whole were resolute and determined. They were also gladdened and

encouraged by good news from the patriot army in New Jersey, where Washington, in the single month of June, had gained advantages over Howe and Cornwallis, and driven them out of that state. There was great rejoicing throughout the country.

But urgent appeals from the patriots of the "Grants" came to New Hampshire for assistance, and those appeals were sustained by reports of the insolence of the British invaders and the barbarities of their Indian allies. The commanding officers at various points sent expresses along the routes as far as No. 4 and Keene, and even beyond, to rally and bring forward the stragglers and reinforcements, directing them to march to Bennington, and thence to join the main army.

The legislature had finished its spring session and adjourned on the 28th of June. A summons from the committee of safety brought the members together again on the 17th of July, for a special session of three days. On the second day the two houses met in convention to discuss the situation—Mesech Weare, chairman of the committee of safety, in the chair. The state was destitute of money and the people had already done all that seemed possible for them to do in the matter of furnishing troops. But Burgoyne must be stopped or his army would overrun their own territory, and their own homes and property would be sacrificed.

The main question was that of raising the means to pay and equip the soldiers. When the gloom of the situation was portrayed, Col. John Langdon, speaker of the house, rose and made one of the most telling speeches of the Revolution.

He said: "Gentlemen, I have three thousand dollars in hard money, thirty hogsheads of Tobago rum, worth as much, I can pledge my plate for as much more; these are at the service of the state. With this money we can raise and provision troops; our friend, John Stark, will lead them. If we check Burgoyne the state can repay me, and if we do not, the money will be of no use to me." The offer was accepted with enthusiasm. The convention rose and the two houses went to their work.

Stark was called from his farm on the Merrimac—whither he had retired because he felt insulted by congress in the appointment of brigadiers—was made a brigadier general, and given command of all the militia on the west side of the state, with orders to take one-fourth of all his troops, with a few from Whipple's brigade on the east side of the state, make his rendezvous at Charlestown and march at once into the Grants. Four companies of rangers were also raised and placed under his command. The militia officers were ordered to take away their arms from all who scrupled or refused to assist in the defence of the country; and a day of "General Fasting, Humiliation and Prayer" was appointed, which "was observed with great solemnity" on the 7th of August.

Stark's commission was from the state and was wholly independent of every other authority. On July 28, 1777, he was at Charlestown. There was no need of a "draft." Plenty of volunteers joined him promptly, for they were alarmed at the danger and they had unbounded confidence in him as a commander. As they arrived he sent them forward by companies and detachments, to report to Col. Seth Warner at Manchester, twenty miles north of Bennington.¹ At Charlestown, he found but few supplies, a part of the powder being worthless; a few pieces of small cannon there and at Walpole, but without carriages and no workmen to mount them; a small quantity of sugar; "Very little Rum;" a few hundred pounds of lead but "only one pair of bullet moulds in town;" all of which delayed his movements; yet when 500 volunteers had reached him, on the 4th of August, he went forward, encamped on the night of the 6th at what is now Peru, Vt., and reached Manchester on the 7th. There he met Gen. Lincoln of the Continental army, who ordered him forward with his troops to join the main army on the Hudson,

¹"The legislature adjourned on Saturday. All that night and the next day, a horseman was riding from Exeter to Concord. Sunday afternoon he dismounted at the church door, and walked up the aisle. The minister stopped and said: 'Captain Hutchins, are you the bearer of a message?' 'Yes, Burgoyne is on his march to Albany. Stark will command the New Hampshire men, and if we all turn out, we can cut him off.' 'My hearers,' said the Rev. Timothy Walker, 'You who are ready to go, better leave at once.' All the men left the house. But Phineas Virgin had no shoes. 'You shall have a pair,' said Samuel Thompson, the shoemaker, 'before tomorrow morning.' Next day those shoes were marching."—President Bartlett's address at Bennington, August 16, 1877.

and to report to Gen. Poor as his brigade commander. Stark refused to obey his order or report to Gen. Poor or any other officer who had been his junior in the army. At the same time he wrote Gen. Schuyler, commander of the northern army, that he was willing to unite in any measure that would promote the public good. Lincoln reported him, and congress passed a vote of reprimand, but subsequent events sustained him.

The important depot of supplies at Bennington was threatened by the enemy. On the 8th, Stark made that point the rendezvous for his troops, and soon afterwards went there himself, taking Col. Warner with him, but leaving his battalion of "Green Mountain Boys" at Manchester for protection on that side. Reinforcements continued to join him, chiefly from Charlestown, a few via Brattleboro. Three of the nine colonels in Stark's brigade of militia joined him, with regiments made up of volunteers from all the regiments and from Whipple's brigade—Nichols of Amherst, Stickney of Concord, and Hobart (or Hubbard) of Plymouth. Col. Ashley, of Winchester, had just returned with his regiment from his march towards Ticonderoga, and his whole force not being called for, he volunteered as aid on Gen. Stark's staff and served with him through the campaign. Col. Nichols had ten companies, four of them from Cheshire county, with Wm. Gregg of Londonderry, lieutenant colonel; and Timothy Ellis, major, and Ebenezer Cook, sergeant major, both of Keene.

Capt. Elisha Mack, of Gilsum, commanded one of the companies, with Josiah Richardson, of Keene, lieutenant. The enlisted men from Keene in that company were Adin Holbrook and Tilly Howe, sergeants; Robert Worsley, corporal; and Cephas Clark, Joshua Durant, Samuel Hall, Ezra Metcalf, Jonathan Wheeler, Daniel Willson, David Willson, Jonathan Dwinnell, Michael Metcalf, Jr., William Woods, David Harris and Zadoc Wheeler, privates. This company marched from Keene on the 22d of July, and was in the battle of Bennington, where Nichols' regiment took a prominent part in the fight. In the same regiment were a company from Chesterfield under Capt. Kimball Carlton,

of sixty-one men; one from Swanzey, under Capt. Samuel Wright, of sixty men; one from Rindge, under Capt. Salmon Stone, of seventy-four men, many of whom were from Marlboro, Dublin and Packersfield; and one from New Ipswich, under Capt. Stephen Parker,¹ of seventy men. The aggregate number of the regiment was about 600. Walpole and Charlestown also sent companies in Col. Hobart's regiment. While at Charlestown, Gen. Stark had appointed Rev. Augustine Hibbard, of Claremont, who had preached for a short time in Keene, chaplain of his brigade, by an order dated Aug. 3, 1777.

Burgoyne had detached Col. Baum with about 700 veterans, two pieces of artillery, a few Canadians and 150 Indians for a raid through the New Hampshire Grants, and to destroy the depot of supplies at Bennington. His orders were to collect cattle and horses, mount his dragoons, destroy such stores as he could not bring off, cross the mountains to Rockingham and return to Albany—where Burgoyne expected to be—by the way of Brattleboro. Baum was also joined by several hundred Tories under Col. Skeene, of Skeensboro. On the 13th, his advance reached Cambridge, twelve miles northwest of Bennington. A woman on horseback—all the men were in the army on one side or the other—brought the news to Stark that there were 200 Indians at Cambridge. Stark had about 1,400 men. He immediately sent Lt. Col. Gregg, of Nichols' regiment, forward to hold the enemy in check. A few hours later, another woman came from the same place to say that 1,500 Hessians and Tories had reached that town. Early the next morning, Stark marched with his whole brigade to support Gregg, whom he met four miles out, retreating before a superior force. Discovering Stark's column, the enemy halted and formed on a commanding ridge. Stark deployed his column and tried to induce Baum to attack him; but Baum was cautious, and intrenched. Leaving a line of skirmishers, Stark fell back about a mile, and his men lay on their arms that night. Friday, the 15th, it rained all day and both parties lay in position;

¹Capt. Parker was father of Elijah Parker, Esq., a prominent citizen of Keene in the early part of the 19th century, lawyer, town clerk, and town agent.

but Stark sent out detachments on both flanks of the enemy to harass them and magnify his own numbers. The Indians reported that the woods were full of Yankees and many of them deserted.

The next morning a few more troops joined Stark, and he now had about 1,600 men.¹ He sent Col. Nichols with 300 men around the enemy's left, and Col. Hendricks with 300 around their right, to unite and attack their rear; and Cols. Hobart and Stickney were to attack their right flank. Taking command of the main body in front of the intrenched position, when all was ready, he made his men a short speech in which he said—and that was nearly all he said—"There are the Redcoats; they are ours, or Mollie² Stark sleeps a widow tonight."

It was 3 o'clock. The signal of attack—the opening fire of Nichols' men—was heard; Stark advanced upon the centre and a furious fire was poured in from every side. But the enemy were stubborn and held their ground for two hours. Then the patriots rushed upon their breastworks, swept everything before them, captured their two pieces of artillery and a large number of prisoners; and the rest abandoned their works and fled. But such a charge always breaks up the organization of the attacking party, and the Americans neglected to re-form and prepare for further action. Some prepared refreshments; some plundered the enemy's camp, and all were off their guard. While in this condition, Stark learned that Breyman's reinforcement of 644 Brunswickers, with two brass field pieces and a number of Tories, was within two miles of him. The men were rallied, ammunition was distributed, and the fight was renewed. Again the enemy fought stubbornly, but when our tired men were nearly exhausted, Col. Warner's battalion, under Major Safford, arrived from Manchester. Stark said to Warner, "For God's sake fall in and let us take breath." With the aid of those fresh troops the fury of the fight was renewed, and at sunset the

¹A short description of the campaign and battle is given for the reason that Keene and Cheshire county were well represented there; and because no other battle has ever been fought so near Keene. The roar of the British cannon was distinctly heard in this town, and even ten miles further east.

²Hiland Hall's History of Vermont, and the language used on the monument at Bennington; but Mrs. Stark's name was not Mollie, but Elizabeth. He probably said "Betty Stark."

enemy gave way and fled in disorder. Stark pursued until dark, captured the other two field pieces, twelve brass drums, all their transportation and horses, 1,000 small arms and about 700 prisoners, among them Baum, who died of his wounds. Two hundred and seven of their dead were found on the field next morning. The English and German prisoners were treated with kindness and sent to Boston; but the tories were regarded as traitors and were treated as such. There were 155 of them; and they were tied in pairs to a long rope, a poor old horse was hitched to the end of the rope and they were led away to jail. Stark's loss was about thirty¹ killed and forty wounded. Among the killed were Michael Metcalf, Jr., and William Wood of Keene, and Joshua Fuller of Surry, showing that Capt. Mack's company was in the hottest of the fight. The names of the wounded were not given.²

This brilliant victory raised the spirits of the people and relieved them from the fear of the destruction of their homes and property by invasion. Stark made no report of the battle, except to the authorities of New Hampshire, but congress heard of it indirectly and passed a vote of thanks and promoted him to be brigadier general in the Continental army. After some hesitation, he accepted the appointment, and, with a fresh brigade raised for him, moved forward and joined the army on the 16th of September; and Nichols' regiment was present at the battle of Stillwater on the 19th. But its term of enlistment had expired, as had that of the other Bennington troops, and it was discharged on the 23d, and the men came home.

Previous to the action at Stillwater, Major Henry

¹The British were on higher ground and shot over.

²Maj. Ellis, Josiah Richardson, Joshua Durant and others, immediately crossed the Green Mountains, and soon found themselves in front of the Hessian breastwork, sustaining and returning an incessant fire. The major, somewhat excited, ordered a charge, and himself and most of his men leaped over, among whom was Durant. The Hessians wavered, scattered and fled. Durant pursued a party of three, and gaining fast upon them, the hindmost turned back, their muskets at this moment touching each other. Durant fired first and killed his antagonist. While reloading, the other two turned back upon him. He wrenched his bayonet from his gun, seized one by the collar, and was about to stab the other, when both called for quarter and surrendered themselves prisoners. The three were brothers. For many years afterwards, Durant occasionally wore, as trophies, a waistcoat and silver mounted breast pin taken from the man he had killed.

Mr. Richardson came home with the glory of having captured three Hessians. He allowed the world to believe the story to be true, as in fact it was, but to his friends he admitted that, either from terror, or dissatisfaction with their condition, they appeared to be not very unwilling captives. (Annals, page 51.)

Dearborn had been placed in command of a battalion of 300 picked men, mostly from Scammel's regiment, in which was the Keene company under Capt. William Ellis, to act as light infantry with Col. Morgan's corps of riflemen. The battle was opened by those troops, sent forward as skirmishers to attack and harass Burgoyne's right flank; and they were sharply engaged, and captured one piece of artillery, but could not bring it off. At 2 o'clock, Arnold, who commanded the American left, sent forward the three New Hampshire Continental regiments, and they made a gallant fight with the British right. Some pieces of British artillery were taken and retaken several times. Getting short of ammunition the Americans withdrew, taking with them their wounded and about 100 prisoners. The British held the ground that night, but withdrew the next day, and left the victory to the Americans. A large share of the fighting was done by the New Hampshire troops, and they were highly complimented for their bravery. Among the killed was Andrew Colburn of Marlboro, lieutenant colonel of Scammel's regiment. In Capt. Ellis's company of about forty men, three were killed and several wounded.

On the 7th of October, Burgoyne, in desperation, again attacked the Americans, and again the New Hampshire troops were conspicuous for their gallantry. That battle was won by the patriot soldiers themselves and their subordinate commanders, no general officer of high rank appearing on the field except Arnold, who was without a command. Among those who were killed or died of wounds received in these engagements were Daniel Snow, of Col. Scammel's regiment, wounded Sept. 19, died Sept. 30; John Crossfield, of the same regiment, wounded Oct. 7, died Oct. 12; and Nathaniel Briggs, of Lt. Col. Reid's regiment, wounded Oct. 7, died Oct. 18, all of Keene. Snow is reported, on different rolls, both as "died of wounds Sept. 30th," and "killed in battle Oct. 7, 1777."

In this campaign to repel the invasion of Burgoyne—considered one of the decisive ones of all history—the little state of New Hampshire, then almost a wilderness, furnished more than 6,000 men and contributed very largely to the grand results attained.

Immediately after Burgoyne's surrender on the 17th, Poor's brigade of New Hampshire Continentals marched forty miles in fourteen hours, fording the Mohawk river on the way, to check the British advance up the Hudson to relieve Burgoyne. When that force retired they marched to Pennsylvania, and with the rest of Washington's army, suffered the hardships and privations of that terrible winter at Valley Forge. The 18th of December was designated by congress, and heartily observed by the people, as a day of thanksgiving and praise to God, our first national Thanksgiving.

While their soldiers had taken part in decisive operations at the front, important matters had come up for action on the part of the people at home. On the 3d of October the state committee of safety "Appointed Major Philbrick to go to Keen, and provide Stores for the Soldiers passing there from this place (Exeter), and Deal it out," thus establishing a small depot of supplies at this point.

The citizens of Keene, and particularly the members of the church, were tired of the long interim between settled ministers. A good report was heard of a young divinity student at Cheshire, Ct., Mr. Aaron Hall—probably through their ex-minister, Rev. Clement Sumner, as he came from that place—and in the spring of 1777, Dea. Daniel Kingsbury was commissioned to visit Mr. Hall and invite him to preach in Keene as a candidate. He came and preached several times during the summer; and a legal town meeting on the 15th of September, Col. Isaac Wyman, moderator—now discharged from his honorable military service—"voted unanimously to hear M^r Hall preach further on Probation." This was the beginning of the highly creditable term, of nearly forty years' duration, of Rev. Aaron Hall as pastor of the church in Keene.

At a town meeting on the 8th of December, Dr. Thomas Frink, moderator, it was "Voted unanimously to Give M^r A. Hall, who has been Preaching among us, a Call to Settle in the Work of the Gospel Ministry in This Town.

"Voted to Give M^r Hall One hundred and Thirty Three pounds Six Shillings and Eight pence for a Settlement said

sum to be made Equal in Value and made as Good as the Same Sum was four years ago when Silver and Gold passed current among us."

Eighty pounds per annum were voted as his salary; that also to be made the equivalent of gold and silver.

Major Timothy Ellis, Capt. Jeremiah Stiles, Lieut. Josiah Richardson, Lieut. Daniel Kingsbury and Ichabod Fisher were chosen a committee to lay the proposition before Mr. Hall and to adjust the amount of his settlement and salary in the paper money of the times; but the committee was instructed to defer the adjustment "till the Tax for said sums is called for by reason of the Fluctuating state of money." Messrs. Gideon Ellis, David Nims and Benjamin Hall were the members of this committee appointed by the church. Mr. Hall accepted the call in a long letter dated Jan. 17, 1778.

For six years the church and the town had been without a pastor. "Nineteen candidates had tried in vain" for a settlement. The twentieth one succeeded and was beloved and respected by all his people. Mr. Hall was ordained on the 18th of February following. The church committee on the ordination consisted of "the following Brothers viz. Mr. David Nims, Deacon Obadiah Blake, Mr. Simeon Clark, Mr. Benjamin Hall, Mr. Daniel Kingsbury." The council was composed of the pastors and delegates from the churches of Windsor and Wallingford, Conn.; and those of New Ipswich, Rev. Mr. Farrar; Fitzwilliam, Rev. Mr. Brigham; Swanzey, Rev. Mr. Goddard; Chesterfield, Rev. Mr. Wood; Walpole, Rev. Mr. Fessenden; Charlestown, Rev. Mr. Olcott; Claremont, Rev. Mr. Hibbard; Dublin, Rev. Mr. Sprague. The council was entertained at the tavern of Lieut. Josiah Richardson, on Pleasant street, and the next annual town meeting voted him "Forty six pounds Twelve Shillings for providing for the Council at Mr Halls Ordination."

The legislature met at Portsmouth on the 17th of September, Major Timothy Ellis representing Keene. A new apportionment of taxes was made, giving the number of polls and an inventory of the ratable estates. Keene returned 167 polls, Richmond 177, Westmoreland 178, and

Chesterfield 189, the largest in the county; but Keene returned much the largest amount of taxable property.

In consequence of the scarcity of wool and leather, an act was passed prohibiting the sale of cattle and sheep to go out of the state except for the use of our armies. An act was also passed "to prevent the pernicious practice of Distilling into any kind of spirits whatever, Cyder, Perry [the juice of pears], Wheat, Indian Corn, rye, Barley & Oats, or either of them."

Another act was passed to compel the people to use paper money instead of gold and silver, and to take it at the same value, dollar for dollar. But experience proved that the laws of trade are more potent than those of legislatures, for that law could not be enforced.

At the town meeting on the 8th of December, 1777, Capt. Jeremiah Stiles, Capt. Davis Howlett and Mr. Jabez Fisher were successively chosen representatives to the legislature, but all declined to serve. (Probably on account of a division of sentiment in the town concerning the Vermont and New Hampshire controversy. See chapter on New Hampshire Grants). Major Timothy Ellis was then reelected "for the space of one year."