

FIRST ANNUAL MEETING
OF THE
HISTORICAL SOCIETY

OF
NEWBURGH BAY AND THE HIGHLANDS,

WITH
ADDRESS BY HON. ERASTUS BROOKS,
COLONEL DAWSON, AND OTHERS.

HELD AT NEWBURGH, N. Y., FEB. 22D, 1884.

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the legs," and thereafter whole regiments were clothed in homespun tow. The poor fellows did not always have even tow shirts and overalls.

The regiments were brigaded under General Montgomery and were with him in all his movements. At Point aux Trembles, on the 1st of December, the entire force under his command had dwindled to about 900 effective men. In fruitless attempts to force an entrance into Quebec three weeks were wasted and then an assault was made. Montgomery, at the head of his New York men, descended from the Plains of Abraham upon the upper town, in the neighborhood of St. John's and St. Louis' gates and Cape Diamond bastion. At the narrowest point under Cape Diamond the British had planted a three-gun battery. On the river side was a precipice, and on the left rough crags of dark slate towered above them. The guard at the battery in front stood ready with lighted matches. Montgomery halted a moment to reconnoiter, and then into the jaws of death charged the nine hundred over heaps of ice and snow. When within forty paces of the battery its fire was opened on the advancing column and a storm of grape-shot swept the narrow pass, and continued for ten minutes. Montgomery and both of his aids and several privates were killed—the unwounded living fell back.

There were some successes in Canada—you can quote them from memory perhaps—can learn them from printed history at least. From that far off field little of the personal record of our own men comes down to us. George Clinton writes in 1776: "Major DuBois (who had been promoted from Captain) is highly recommended to Congress as well by the general officers as the committee who lately returned from Canada. Captain Bruyn, I believe is the oldest captain who continued in Canada, and from my brother's (Col. James Clinton) character of him, well deserves the post which his rank will entitle him to. He is a young man of education and fortune, and bears an unblemished character. I wish and believe young Richard Platt may be properly provided for in the (new) regiment. He was with Major DuBois and Capt. Bruyn at Point Lacoy at the engagement between our people and a number of Canadians, in which the latter were defeated, and behaved well, as Major DuBois can testify." It may be added that Capt. Bruyn was the son of Sergt. Jacobus Bruyn, of 1738, who was one of the company who laid out the "old town of Newburgh plot" in 1729.

The term of service of the New York regiments soon expired. Some of their members were willing to remain for another six months, others had broken down, and others had aspirations in another direction. The outcome was that from those who were willing to remain a new regiment was formed, which may be called the fourth of the first New York Continental Line, although I am not aware that it has that place in official records. Capt. John Nicholson of Clinton's third regiment, who had been therein promoted to lieutenant-colonel, was appointed colonel of the new organization. The following were commissioned officers:

John Nicholson, colonel; John Vischer, lieutenant-colonel; John Brogdon, adjutant; Israel Evans, chaplain; Joseph Marvin, surgeon.

Captains—Gershom Mott, Elisha Benedict, John Graham, Robt. Johnston,

Ezekiel Cooper, Benj. Evans, Derick Hansen, John Copp.

First lieutenants—Digby Odlum, John G. Lansing, William Martin, Timothy Hughes, Isaac Hubble, John Brogdon.

Second Lieutenants—Isaac Nicoll, Nathl. Henry, Francis Brendly, Thomas Nicholson, William Belknap, Thomas McClelland, Isaac Guinon, John Blanckney.

Ensign—Charles F. Van Weisenfels, Francis Shaw, Asa Holmes, Peter Hartan, Thomas Lemington, Samuel Preble, John Blanckney, Thomas Logan.

The regiment remained in Canada until the further prosecution of the invasion was abandoned, and on its return was sent to the western frontier and stationed at Johnstown, in the present county of Fulton, where its term of service was completed.

Colonel Nicholson retired from the service and spent his remaining days on his farm at Neelytown, in the town of Montgomery. In early manhood he was clerk of the town of New Windsor. In 1775, he was a member of the first Provincial Congress of New York, and of the State Assembly, 1782-3-4, and in 1810. His remains now repose in the cemetery at Neelytown in his native town.

Ensigns Weisenfels subsequently went into the 3d New York and attained the rank of lieutenant-colonel. Gershom Mott became captain in Lamb's artillery. He was stationed at Fort Constitution at the time of the capture of Forts Clinton and Montgomery. His descendants of the same name have served in the U. S. army until a recent period.

In other organizations most of the officers of the regiment found subsequent place, of whom Ezekiel Cooper, William Belknap, Isaac Hubbel, Isaac Guinon, and Nathaniel Henry, served during the war. William Belknap has descendants among us in Edward S. Belknap and the Sanxays. Chaplain Evans was the originator and designer of the Temple at New Windsor. Time is not at my command for a more specific record of them, or of very many of those connected with other regiments, and I must be content with an occasional note in reference to those who, though deserving, have but slight mention in general histories.

On the 8th of January, 1776, the Continental Congress issued its first formal call for troops to reinforce the army in Canada, under which a single battalion was furnished by New York. A second call was issued on the 19th of the same month and required four battalions from New York. These battalions were assigned respectively to Cols. Alex. McDougal, James Clinton, Rudolphus Ritzema and Philip Van Cortlandt. The quota of Orange county was two companies, but three were raised under command respectively of Capt. Daniel Denton, of Goshen; Capt. William Roe, of Cornwall, and Capt. Amos Hutchins, of Orangetown, and were assigned to Col. Ritzema's (3d) regiment. Ulster county was required to furnish three companies, which were speedily recruited under Capt. John Belknap, of New Windsor; Capt. William Jackson, of Montgomery, and Capt. Cornelius Hardenberg, of Hurley, and were assigned to Col. Clinton's (2d) regiment. These regiments were all short term men. The 1st, 2d and 3d were assigned to the defense of New York City, and were brigaded under Brig. Gens. McDougal and James Clinton, who had been pro-